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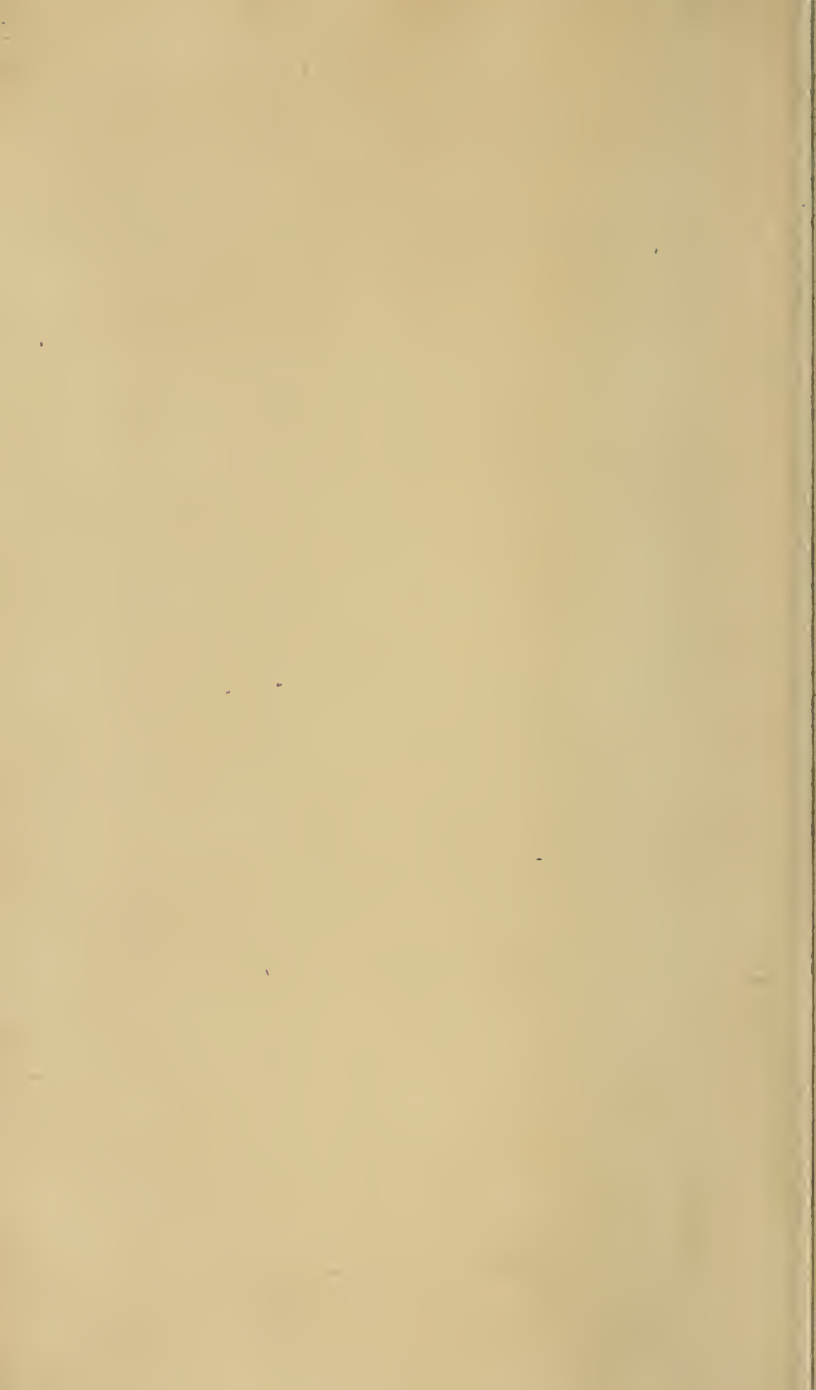
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THE
WORKS
OF THE
ENGLISH POETS.

WITH
PREFACES,
BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,
BY
SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

Re-edited,
WITH NEW BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL MATTER,
BY J. AIKIN, M.D.

VOL. VI.

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1802.

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THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
EDMUND SPENSER.
IN SIX VOLUMES.

FROM
THE TEXT OF J. UPTON.

WITH A
PREFACE, BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,
BY J. AIKIN, M.D.

VOL. VI.

THE

AMERICAN

REVIEW

OF

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OF THE

SIXTH VOLUME.

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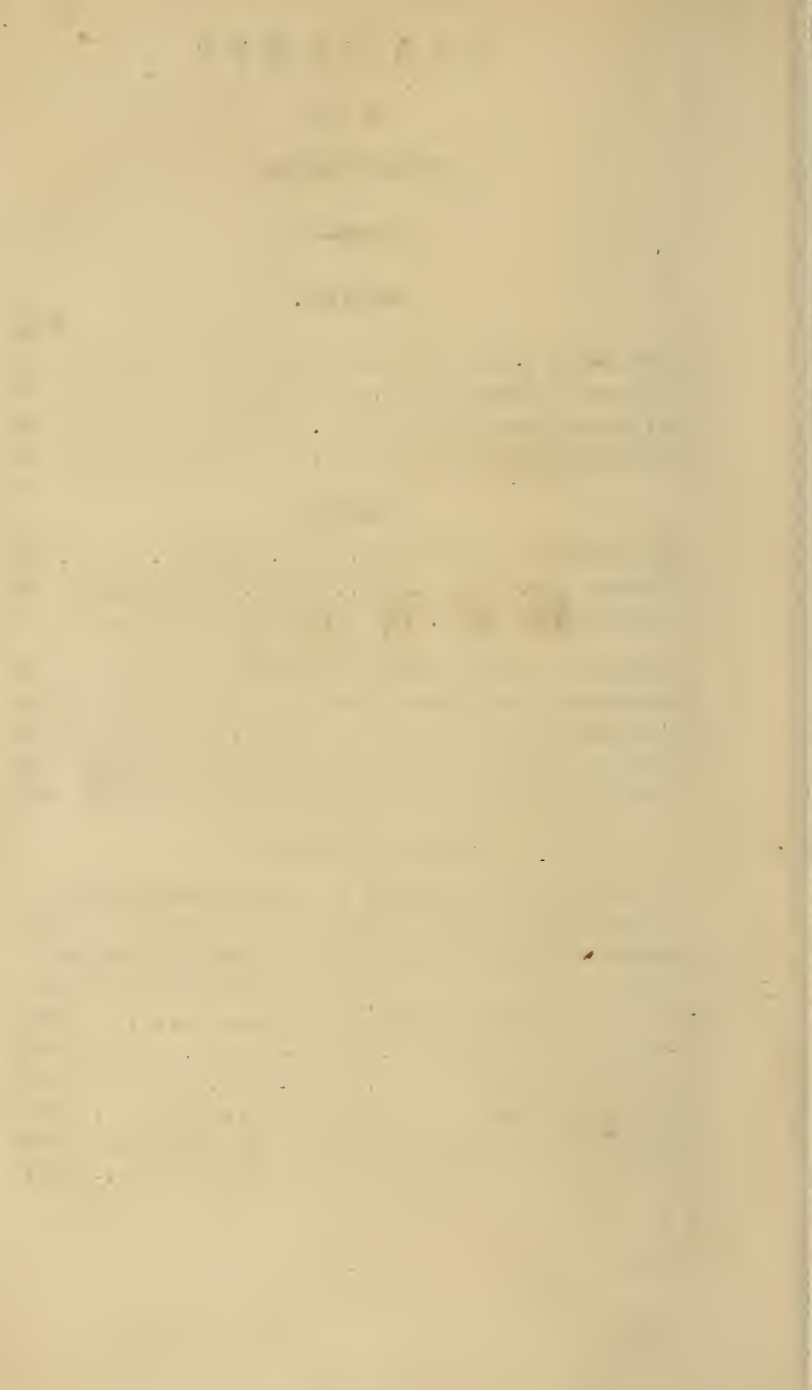
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H Y M N S.

27501

To the right Honourable and most vertuous Ladies

THE LADY MARGARET,

COUNTESS OF CUMBERLAND;

AND THE LADY MARY,

COUNTESS OF WARWICK.

HAVING, in the greener times of my youth, composed these former two Hymns in the praise of love and beauty, and finding that the same too much pleased those of like age and disposition, which being too vehemently carried with that kind of affection, do rather suck out poison to their strong passion, than honey to their honest delight, I was moved by the one of you two most excellent Ladies to cull in the same; but being unable so to do, by reason that many copies thereof were formerly scattered abroad, I resolved at least to amend, and, by way of retraction, to reform them, making (instead of those two Hymns of earthly or natural love and beauty) two others of heavenly and celestial; the which I do dedicate jointly unto you two honourable sisters, as to the most excellent and rare ornaments of all true love and beauty, both in the one and the other kind; humbly besecching you to

DEDICATION.

vouchsafe the patronage of them, and to accept this my humble service, in lieu of the great graces and honourable favours which ye daily show unto me, until such time as I may, by better means, yield you some more notable testimony of my thankful mind and dutiful happiness. And even so I pray for your happiness.

Your Honours most bounden ever,

In all humble service,

Greenwich this first of .

September, 1596.

EDMUND SPENSER.

AN HYMN

IN HONOUR OF LOVE.

LOVE, that long since hast to thy mighty powro
Perforce subdu'd my poor captiv'd heart,
And raging now therein with restless stowre,
Dost tyrannize in every weaker part,
Fain would I seek to ease my bitter smart 5
By any service I might do to thee,
Or ought that else might to thee pleasing be.

And now t' assuage the force of this new flame,
And make thee more propitious in my need,
I mean to sing the praises of thy name, 10
And thy victorious conquests to areed,
By which thou madest many hearts to bleed
Of mighty victors, with wide wounds inbru'd,
And by thy cruel darts to thee subdu'd.

Only I fear my wits enfeebled late, 15
Through the sharp sorrows which thou hast me bred,
Should faint, and words should fail me to relate
The wondrous triumphs of thy great god-head :
But if thou wouldst vouchsafe to overspread
Me with the shadow of thy gentle wing, 20
I should enabled be thy acts to sing.

Come, then, O come, thou mighty God of Love !
 Out of thy silver bowres and secret bliss,
 Where thou dost sit in Venus' lap above,
 Bathing thy wings in her ambrosial kiss, 25
 That sweeter far than any nectar is ;
 Come softly, and my feeble breast inspire
 With gentle fury, kindled of thy fire.

And ye, sweet Muses ! which have often proved
 The piercing points of his avengeful darts ; 30
 And ye, fair Nymphes ! which oftentimes have loved
 The cruel worker of your kindly smarts,
 Prepare yourselves, and open wide your hearts
 For to receive the triumph of your glory,
 That made you merry oft when ye were sorry. 35

And ye, fair blossoms of youth's wanton breed !
 Which in the conquests of your beauty boast,
 Wherewith your lovers feeble eyes you feed,
 But starve their hearts that needeth nurture most,
 Prepare your selves to march amongst his host, 40
 And all the way this sacred Hymn to sing,
 Made in the honour of your sovereign king.

GREAT God of might, that reigneth in the mind,
 And all the body to thy hest dost frame,
 Victor of gods, subduer of mankind, 45
 That dost the lions and fell tygers tame,
 Making their cruel rage thy scornful game,
 And in their roaring taking great delight,
 Who can express the glory of thy might ?

Or who alive can perfectly declare 50
The wondrous cradle of thine infancy,
When thy great mother Venus first thee bare,
Begot of Plenty and of Penury,
Though elder than thine own nativity,
And yet a child, renewing still thy years, 55
And yet the eldest of the heavenly peers ?

For ere this world's still moving mighty mass
Out of great Chaos' ugly prison crept,
In which his goodly face long hidden was
From heaven's view, and in deep darkness kept, 60
Love, that had now long time securely slept
In Venus' lap, unarmed then and naked,
Gan rear his head, by Clotho being waked :

And taking to him wings of his own heat,
Kindled at first from heaven's life-giving fire, 65
He gan to move out of his idle seat ;
Weakly at first, but after with desire
Lifted aloft, he 'gan to mount up higher,
And, like fresh eagle, made his hardy flight
Thro all the great wide waste yet wanting light. 70

Yet wanting light to guide his wandring way,
His own fair mother, for all creatures' sake,
Did lend him light from her own goodly ray ;
Then through the world his way he gan to take,
The world, that was not till he did it make, 75
Whose sundry parts he from themselves did sever,
The which before had lyen confused ever.

The earth, the air, the water and the fire,
Then gan to range themselves in huge array,
And with contrary forces to conspire 80
Each against other by all means they may,
Threatning their own confusion and decay :
Air hated earth, and water hated fire,
Till Love relented their rebellious ire.

He then them took, and tempering goodly well 85
Their contrary dislikes with loved means,
Did place them all in order, and compell
To keep themselves within their sundry reigns,
Together link'd with adamantine chains ;
Yet so as that in every living wight 90
They mix themselves, and shew their kindly might.

So ever since they firmly have remained,
And duly well observed his behest ;
Thro which now all these things that are contained
Within this goodly cope, both most and least, 95
Their being have, and daily are increast
Thro secret sparks of his infused fire,
Which in the barren cold he doth inspire.

Thereby they all do live, and moved are
To multiply the likeness of their kind, 100
Whilst they seek only, without further care,
To quench the flame which they in burning find ;
But man that breathes a more immortal mind,
Not for lust's sake, but for eternity,
Seeks to enlarge his lasting progeny ; 105

For having yet in his deducted spright
Some sparks remaining of that heavenly fire,
He is enlumin'd with that goodly light,
Unto like goodly semblant to aspire ;
Therefore in choice of love he doth desire 110
That seems on earth most heavenly to embrace,
That same is Beauty, born of heavenly race.

For sure of all that in this mortal frame
Contained is, nought more divine doth seem,
Or that resembleth more th' immortal flame 115
Of heavenly light, than beauty's glorious beam.
What wonder then if with such rage extreme
Frail men, whose eyes seek heavenly things to see,
At sight thereof so much enravish'd be ?

Which well perceiving, that imperious boy 120
Doth therewith tip his sharp empoisoned darts,
Which glancing thro the eyes with count'nance coy
Rest not till they have pierc'd the trembling hearts,
And kindled flame in all their inner parts,
Which sucks the blood and drinketh up the life 125
Of careful wretches with consuming grief.

Thenceforth they 'plain, and make full piteous moan
Unto the author of their baleful bane ?
The days they waste, the nights they grieve and groan,
Their lives they loath, and heaven's light disdain ;
No light but that whole lamp doth yet remain 131
Fresh burning in the image of their eye,
They 'sdeign to see, and seeing it still die.

The whilst thou tyrant Love dost laugh and scorn
At their complaints, making their pain thy play,
Whilst they lie languishing like thralls forlorn, 136
The whiles thou dost triumph in their decay ;
And otherwhiles, their dying to delay,
Thou dost enmarble the proud heart of her
Whose love before their life they do prefer. 140

So hast thou often done (ay me, the more !)
To me thy vassal, whose yet bleeding heart
With thousand wounds thou mangled hast so sore,
That whole remains scarce any little part ;
Yet to augment the anguish of my smart, 145
Thou hast enfrozen her disdainful brest,
That no one drop of pity there doth rest.

Why then do I this honour unto thee,
Thus to ennoble thy victorious name,
Sith thou dost shew no favour unto me, 150
Ne once move ruth in that rebellious dame,
Somewhat to slake the rigour of my shame ?
Certes small glory dost thou win hereby,
To let her live thus free, and me to die.

But if thou be indeed, as men thee call, 155
The world's great parent, the most kind preserver
Of living wights, the sovereign lord of all,
How falls it then that with thy furious fervour
Thou dost afflict as well the not-deserver,
As him that doth thy lovely heasts despise, 160
And on thy subjects most doth tyrannize ?

Yet herein eke thy glory seemeth more,
By so hard handling those which best thee serve,
That ere thou dost them unto grace restore,
Thou maist well try if thou wilt ever swerve, 165
And maist them make it better to deserve,
And having got it, may it more esteem ;
For things hard gotten men more dearly deem.

So hard those heavenly beauties be enfr'd
As things divine, least passions do impress, 170
The more of stedfast minds to be admir'd,
The more they stayed be on stedfastness ;
But baseborn minds such lamps regard the less,
Which at first blowing take not hasty fire ;
Such fancies feel no love, but loose desire. 175

For Love is lord of Truth and Loyalty,
Lifting himself out of the lowly dust
On golden plumes up to the purest sky,
Above the reach of loathly sinful lust,
Whose base effect through cowardly distrust 180
Of his weak wings dare not to heaven flie,
But like a moldwarp in the earth doth lie.

His dunghil thoughts, which do themselves enure
To dirty dross, no higher dare aspire,
Ne can his feeble earthly eyes endure 185
The flaming light of that celestial fire
Which kindleth love in generous desire,
And makes him mount above the native might
Of heavy earth, up to the heavens hight.

Such is the powre of that sweet passion, 190
That it all sordid baseness doth expell,
And the refined mind doth newly fashion
Unto a fairer form, which now doth dwell
In his high thought, that would it self excel,
Which he beholding still with constant sight, 195
Admires the mirrour of so heavenly light.

Whose image printing in his deepest wit,
He thereon feeds his hungry fantasie,
Still full, yet never satisfide with it,
Like Tantale, that in store doth starved lie, 200
So doth he pine in most satiety ;
For nought may quench his infinite desire,
Once kindled through that first conceived fire.

Thereon his mind affixed wholly is,
Ne thinks on ought but how it to attain ; 205
His care, his joy, his hope, is all on this,
That seems in it all blisses to contain,
In sight thereof all other bliss seems vain :
Thrice happy Man ! might he the same possess,
He fains himself, and doth his fortune bless. 210

And though he do not win his wish to end,
Yet thus far happy he himself doth ween,
That heavens such happy grace did to him lend,
As thing on earth so heavenly to have seen
His heart's enshrined saint, his heaven's queen, 215
Fairer then fairest, in his faining eye,
Whose sole aspect he counts felicity.

Then forth he casts in his unquiet thought,
What he may do her favour to obtain ;
What brave exploit, what peril hardly wrought, 220
What puissant conquest, what adventurous pain
May please her best, and grace unto him gain ;
He dreads no danger, nor misfortune fears,
His faith, his fortune, in his breast he bears.

Thou art his god, thou art his mighty guide, 225
Thou, being blind, letst him not see his fears,
But carriest him to that which he had ey'd,
Through seas, through flames, through thousand
swords and spears ;
Ne ought so strong that may his force withstand,
With which thou armest his resistless hand. 230

Witness Leander in the Euxine waves,
And stout Æneas in the Trojan fire,
Achilles pressing through the Phrygian glaves,
And Orpheus, daring to provoke the ire
Of damned fiends to get his love retire ; 235
For both through heaven and hell thou makest way,
To win them worship'd which do thee obey.

And if by all these perils and these pains
He may but purchase liking in her eye,
What heavens of joy then to himself he feigns ! 240
Eftsoones he wipes quite out of memory
Whatever ill before he did aby :
Had it been death, yet would he die again,
To live thus happy as her grace to gain.

Yet when he hath found favour to his will, 245
He nathemore can so contented rest,
But forceth further on, and striveth still
T' approach more near, till in her inmost breast
He may embosom'd be and loved best ;
And yet not best, but to be lov'd alone ; 250
For love cannot endure a paragon.

The fear whereof, O how doth it torment
His troubled mind with more than hellish pain !
And to his feigning fansie represent
Sights never seen, and thousand shadows vain, 255
To break his sleep, and waste his idle brain :
Thou that hast never lov'd canst not believe
Least part of th' evils which poor lovers grieve,

The gnawing envy, the heart-fretting fear,
The vain surmises, the distrustful shows, 260
The false reports that flying tales do bear,
The doubts, the dangers, the delays, the woes,
The feigned friends, the unassured foes,
With thousands more than any tongue can tell,
Do make a lover's life a wretch's hell. 265

Yet is there one more cursed than they all,
That canker-worm, that monster, Jealousie,
Which eats the heart and feeds upon the gall,
Turning all Love's delight to misery,
Through fear of losing his felicity. 270
Ah, Gods ! that ever ye that monster placed
In gentle love, that all his joys defaced !

By these, O Love ! thou dost thy entrance make
Unto thy heaven, and dost the more endear
Thy pleasures unto those which them partake, 275
As after storms, when clouds begin to clear,
The sun more bright and glorious doth appear ;
So thou thy folk, through pains of Purgatory,
Dost bear unto thy bliss, and heaven's glory.

There thou them placest in a paradise 280
Of all delight and joyous happy rest,
Where they do feed on nectar heavenly wise,
With Hercules and Hebe, and the rest
Of Venus' dearlings, through her bounty blest,
And lie like gods in ivory beds arrayd, 285
With rose and lillies over them displayd.

There with thy daughter Pleasure they do play
Their hurtless sports, without rebuke or blame,
And in her snowy bosom boldly lay
Their quiet heads, devoid of guilty shame, 290
After full joyance of their gentle game ;
Then her they crown their goddess and their queen,
And deck with flowers thy altars well beseen.

Ay me ! dear Lord ! that ever I might hope,
For all the pains and woes that I endure, 295
To come at length unto the wished scope
Of my desire, or might myself assure
That happy port for ever to recure !
Then would I think these pains no pains at all,
And all my woes to be but penance small. 300

Then would I sing of thine immortal praise
And heavenly hymn, such as the angels sing,
And thy triumphant name then would I raise
'Bove all the gods, thee only honouring ; 303
My guide, my god, my victor, and my king :
Till then, drad Lord ! vouchsafe to take of me
This simple song, thus fram'd in praise of thee. 308

AN HYMN

IN HONOUR OF BEAUTY.

AH! whither, Love! wilt thou now carry me?
What wontless fury dost thou now inspire
Into my feeble breast, too full of thee?
Whilst seeking to aslake thy raging fire,
Thou in me kindlest much more great desire, 5
And up aloft above my strength doth raise
The wondrous matter of my fire to praise.

That as I earst, in praise of thine own name,
So now in honour of thy mother dear,
An honourable Hymn I eke should frame, 10
And with the brightness of her beauty clear,
The ravisht hearts of gazeful men might rear
To admiration of that heavenly light,
From whence proceeds such soul-enchanting might.

Thereto do thou, great Goddess! Queen of Beauty,
Mother of Love, and of all worlds delight, 16
Without whose sovereign grace and kindly duty
Nothing on earth seems fair to fleshly sight,
Do thou vouchsafe with thy love-kindling light
T'illuminate my dim and dulled eyn, 20
And beautify this sacred Hymn of thine:

That both to thee, to whom I mean it most,
And eke to her, whose fair immortal beam
Hath darted fire into my feeble ghost,
That now it wasted is with woe's extream, 25
It may so please, that she at length will stream
Some dew of grace into my wither'd heart,
After long sorrow and consuming smart.

WHAT time this world's great Workmaster did cast
To make all things such as we now behold, 30
It seems that he before his eyes had plac'd
A goodly pattern, to whose perfect mould
He fashion'd them as comely as he could,
That now so fair and seemly they appear,
As nought may be amended any where. 35

That wondrous pattern, wheresoere it be,
Whether in earth laid up in secret store,
Or else in heaven, that no man may it see
With sinful eyes, for fear it to deflore,
Is perfect Beauty, which all men adore, 40
Whose face and feature doth so much excel
All mortal sense, that none the same may tell.

Thereof as every earthly thing partakes
Or more or less, by influence divine,
So it more fair accordingly it makes, 45
And the gross matter of this earthly mine
Which closeth it thereafter doth refine,
Doing away the dross which dims the light
Of that fair beam which therein is empight.

For through infusion of celestial powre, 50
The duller earth it quickneth with delight,
And life-full spirits privily doth poure
Through all the parts, that to the looker's sight
They seem to please ; that is thy sovereign might,
O Cyprian queen ! which flowing from the beam 55
Of thy bright star, thou into them dost stream.

That is the thing which giveth pleasant grace
To all things fair, that kindleth lively fire,
Light of thy lamp, which shining in the face,
Thence to the soul darts amorous desire, 60
And robs the hearts of those which it admire ;
Therewith thou pointest thy son's pois'ned arrow,
That wounds the life, and wastes the inmost marrow.

How vainly then do idle wits invent,
That Beauty is nought else but mixture made 65
Of colours fair, and goodly temp'rament
Of pure complexions, that shall quickly fade
And pass away, like to a summer's shade ;
Or that it is but comely composition
Of parts well measur'd, with meet disposition ? 70

Hath white and red in it such wondrous powre,
That it can pierce through th'eyes unto the heart,
And therein stir such rage and restless stowre,
As nought but death can stint his dolorous smart ?
Or can proportion of the outward part 75
Move such affection in the inward mind,
That it can rob both sense and reason blind ?

Why do not then the blossoms of the field,
Which are array'd with much more orient hue,
And to the sense most dainty odours yield, 80
Work like impression in the looker's view?
Or why do not fair pictures like powre shew,
In which oft-times we Nature see of Art
Excell'd, in perfect limming every part?

But ah! believe me there is more than so, 85
That works such wonders in the minds of men;
I that have often prov'd too well it know,
And whoso list the like assays to ken,
Shall find by trial, and confess it then,
That Beauty is not, as fond men misdeem, 90
An outward shew of things that only seem.

For that same goodly hue of white and red,
With which the cheeks are sprinkled, shall decay,
And those sweet rosie leaves, so fairly spread
Upon the lips, shall fade and fall away 95
To that they were, even to corrupted clay:
That golden wire, those sparkling stars so bright,
Shall turn to dust, and lose their goodly light.

But that fair lamp, from whose celestial ray
That light proceeds, which kindleth lovers' fire, 100
Shall never be extinguisht nor decay,
But when the vital spirits do expire,
Unto her native planet shall retire;
For it is heavenly born and cannot die,
Being a parcel of the purest sky. 105

For when the soul, the which derived was,
At first, out of that great immortal spright,
By whom all live to love, whylom did pass
Down from the top of purest heaven's light
To be embodied here, it then took light 110
And lively spirits from that fairest star
Which lights the world forth from his fiery car.

Which powre retaining still or more or less,
When she in fleshly seed is eft enraced,
Through every part she doth the same impress, 115
According as the heavens have her graced,
And frames her house, in which she will be placed,
Fit for her self, adorning it with spoil
Of th' heavenly riches which she robb'd erewhile.

Thereof it comes that these fair souls, which have
The most resemblance of that heavenly light, 121
Frame to themselves most beautiful and brave
Their fleshly bowre, most fit for their delight,
And the gross matter by a sovereign might
Temper so trim, that it may well be seen 125
A palace fit for such a virgin queen.

So every spirit, as it is most pure,
And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
So it the fairer body doth procure
To habit in, and it more fairely dight 130
With chearful grace and amiable sight;
For of the soul the body form doth take;
For soul is form, and doth the body make.

Therefore where-ever that thou dost behold
A comely corpse, with beauty fair endewed, 135
Know this for certain, that the same doth hold
A beauteous soul, with fair conditions thewed,
Fit to receive the seed of vertue strewed ;
For all that fair is, is by nature good ;
That is a sign to know the gentle blood. 140

Yet oft it falls that many a gentle mind
Dwells in deformed tabernacle dround,
Either by chance, against the course of kind,
Or through unaptness in the substance found,
Which it assumed of some stubborn ground, 145
That will not yield unto her form's direction,
But is perform'd with some foul imperfection.

And oft it falls, (ay me, the more to rue !)
That goodly Beauty, albe heavenly born,
Is foul abus'd, and that celestial hue, 150
Which doth the world with her delight adorn,
Made but the bait of sin, and sinners' scorn,
Whilst every one doth seek and sue to have it,
But every one doth seek but to deprave it.

Yet nathemore is that fair Beauty's blame, 155
But theirs that do abuse it unto ill :
Nothing so good, but that through guilty shame
May be corrupt, and wrested unto will :
Natheless the soul is fair and beauteous still,
However flesh's fault it filthy make, 160
For things immortal no corruption take.

But ye, fair Dames ! the world's dear ornaments,
And lively images of heaven's light,
Let not your beams with such disparagements
Be dimm'd, and your bright glory darkned quite ;
But mindful still of your first country's sight, 166
Do still preserve your first informed grace,
Whose shadow yet shines in your beauteous face.

Loath that foul blot, that hellish firebrand,
Disloyal lust, fair Beauty's foulest blame, 170
That base affection, which your ears would bland,
Commend to you by Love's abused name,
But is indeed the bond-slave of Defame,
Which will the girland of your glory mar,
And quench the sight of your bright-shining star. 175

But gentle Love, that loyal is and true,
Will more illumine your resplendent ray,
And add more brightness to your goodly hue,
From light of his pure fire, which by like way
Kindled of your's, your likeness doth display ; 180
Like as two mirrours by oppos'd reflection,
Do both express the face's first impression.

Therefore to make your beauty more appear,
It you behoves to love, and forth to lay
That heavenly riches which in you ye bear, 185
That men the more admire their fountain may ;
For else what booteth that celestial ray,
If it in darkness be enshrined ever,
That it of loving eyes be viewed never ?

But in your choice of loves this well advise, 190
That likest to your selves ye them select,
The which your forms' first source may sympathize,
And with like beauty's parts be inly deckt;
For if you loosely love without respect,
It is not love, but a discordant war, 195
Whose unlike parts amongst themselves do jar.

For love is a celestial harmony
Of likely hearts compos'd of stars' consent,
Which join together in sweet sympathy,
To work each other's joy and true consent, 200
Which they have harbour'd since their first descent
Out of their heavenly bowres, where they did see
And know each other here belov'd to be.

'Then wrong it were that any other twain
Should in Love's gentle band combined be 205
But those whom Heaven did at first ordain,
And made out of one mould the more t'agree;
For all that like the beauty which they see
Straight do not love; for Love is not so light
As straight to burn at first beholder's sight. 210

But they which love indeed look otherwise,
With pure regard and spotless true intent,
Drawing out of the object of their eyes
A more refined form, which they present
Unto their mind, void of all blemishment; 215
Which it reducing to her first perfection,
Beholdeth free from flesh's frail infection,

And then conforming it unto the light,
Which in it self it hath remaining still,
Of that first sun, yet sparkling in his sight, 220
Thereof he fashions in his higher skill
An heavenly beauty to his fancy's will,
And it embracing in his mind entire,
The mirrour of his own thought doth admire.

Which seeing now so inly fair to be, 225
As outward it appeareth to the eye,
And with his spirit's proportion to agree,
He thereon fixing all his fantasie,
And fully setteth his felicity,
Counting it fairer than it is indeed, 230
And yet indeed her fairness doth exceed.

For lovers' eyes more sharply sighted be
Than other mens, and in dear love's delight
See more than any other eyes can see,
Through mutual receipt of beames bright, 235
Which carry privy message to the spright,
And to their eyes that inmost fair display,
As plain as light discovers dawning day.

Therein they see, through amorous eye-glaunces,
Armies of Loves still flying to and fro, 240
Which dart at them their little fiery launces ;
Whom having wounded, back again they go,
Carrying compassion to their lovely foe ;
Who seeing her fair eyes' so sharp effect,
Cures all their sorrows with one sweet aspect. 245

In which how many wonders do they reed
 To their conceit, that others never see ?
 Now of her smiles, with which their souls they feed,
 Like gods with nectar in their banquets free ;
 Now of her looks, which like to cordials be ; 250
 But when her words' embassy forth she sends,
 Lord, how sweet musick that unto them lends !

Sometimes upon her forehead they behold
 A thousand graces masking in delight,
 Sometimes within her eye-lids they unfold 25
 Ten thousand sweet belgards, which to their sight
 Do seem like twinkling stars in frosty night ;
 But on her lips, like rosie buds in May,
 So many millions of chaste Pleasures play.

All those, O Cytherea ! and thousands more 260
 Thy handmaids be, which do on thee attend,
 To deck thy beauty with their dainties' store,
 That may it more to mortal eyes commend,
 And make it more admir'd of foe and friend,
 That in mens hearts thou maist thy throne install,
 And spread thy lovely kingdom over all. 266

Then Iö, triumph ! O great Beauty's Queen,
 Advance the banner of thy conquest high,
 That all this world, the which thy vassels been,
 May draw to thee, and with due fealty 270
 Adore the powre of thy great majesty,
 Singing this Hymn in honour of thy name,
 Compil'd by me, which thy poor liegeman am !

In lieu whereof grant, O great Sovereign !
That she whose conquering beauty doth captive 275
My trembling heart in her eternal chain,
One drop of grace at length will to me give,
That I her bounden thrall by her may live,
And this same life, which first from me she reaved,
May owe to her, of whom I it received. 280

And you fair Venus' dearling, my dear Dread !
Fresh flowre of grace, great goddess of my life,
When your fair eyes these fearful lines shall read,
Deign to let fall one drop of due relief,
That may recure my heart's long pining grief, 285
And shew what wondrous powre your beauty hath,
That can restore a damned wight from death. 287

AN HYMN

OF HEAVENLY LOVE.

LOVE, lift me up upon thy golden wings
From this base world unto thy heavens hight,
Where I may see those admirable things
Which there thou workest by thy sovereign might,
Far above feeble reach of earthly sight, 5
That I thereof an heavenly Hymn may sing
Unto the God of Love, high Heaven's King.

Many lewd layes (ah ! woe is me the more !)
In praise of that mad fit which fools call Love,
I have in th' heat of youth made heretofore, 10
That in light wits did loose affection move ;
But all those follies now I do reprove,
And turned have the tenor of my string,
The heavenly praises of true Love to sing.

And ye that wont with greedy vain desire 15
To read my fault, and, wondring at my flame,
To warm your selves at my wide sparkling fire,
Sith now that heat is quenched, quench my blame,
And in her ashes shrowd my dying shame ;
For who my passed follies now pursues, 20
Begins his own, and my old fault renews.

BEFORE this world's great frame, in which all things
Are now contain'd, found any being-place,
Ere flitting Time could wag his eyas wings
About that mighty bound which doth embrace 25
The rolling sphere, and parts their howers by space,
'That high eternal Powre, which now doth move
In all these things, mov'd in it self by love.

It lov'd it self, because it self was fair,
(For fair is lov'd, and of it self begot) 30
Like to it self his eldest Son and heir,
Eternal, pure, and void of sinful blot,
The firstling of his joy, in whom no jot
Of love's dislike or pride was to be found,
Whom he therefore with equal honour crown'd. 35

With him he reign'd, before all time prescribed,
In endless glory and immortal might,
Together with that third from them derived,
Most wise, most holy, most almighty Spright !
Whose kingdom's throne no thoughts of earthly wight
Can comprehend, much less my trembling verse 41
With equal words can hope it to rehearse.

Yet, O most blessed Spirit ! pure lamp of light,
Eternal spring of grace and wisdom true,
Vouchsafe to shed into my barren spright 45
Some little drop of thy celestial dew,
That may my rimes with sweet infuse embrew,
And give me words equal unto my thought,
To tell the marveils by thy mercy wrought.

Yet being pregnant still with powreful grace, 50
And full of fruitful Love, that loves to get
Things like himself, and to enlarge his race,
His second brood, though not of powre so great,
Yet full of beauty, next he did beget,
An infinite increase of angels bright, 55
All glistring glorious in their Maker's light.

To them the heavens' illimitable height
(Not this round heaven, which we from hence behold,
Adorn'd with thousand lamps of burning light,
And with ten thousand gemms of shining gold) 60
He gave as their inheritance to hold,
That they might serve him in eternal bliss,
And be partakers of those joys of his.

There they in their trinal triplicities
About him wait, and on his will depend, 65
Either with nimble wings to cut the skies,
When he them on his messages doth send,
Or on his own drad presence to attend;
Where they behold the glory of his light,
And caroll hymns of love both day and night. 70

Both day and night is unto them all one,
For he his beams doth unto them extend,
That darkness there appeareth never none;
Ne hath their day, ne hath their bliss, an end,
But there their tameless time in pleasure spend; 75
Ne ever should there happiness decay,
Had not they dar'd their Lord to disobay.

But pride, impatient of long resting peace,
 Did puff them up with greedy bold ambition,
 That they 'gan cast their state how to increase 80
 Above the fortune of their first condition,
 And sit in God's own seat without commission :
 The brightest angel, even the child of Light,
 Drew millions more against their God to fight.

Th' Almighty, seeing their so bold assay, 85
 Kindled the flame of his consuming ire,
 And with his only breath them blew away
 From heaven's hight, to which they did aspire,
 'To deepest hell, and lake of damned fire,
 Where they in darkness and drad horror dwell, 90
 Hating the happy light from which they fell.

So that next off-spring of the Maker's love,
 Next to himself in glorious degree,
 Degenerating to hate, fell from above
 Through pride, (for pride and love may ill agree) .
 And now of sin to all ensample be : 96
 How then can sinful flesh it self assure,
 Sith purest angels fell to be impure ?

But that eternal fount of love and grace,
 Still flowing forth his goodness unto all, 100
 Now seeing left a waste and empty place
 In his wide palace, through those angels' fall,
 Cast to supply the same, and to enstall
 A new unknown colonie therein, [begin.
 Whose root from earth's baſe ground-work should

Therefore of clay, base, vile, and next to nought, 106
Yet form'd by wondrous skill, and by his might,
According to an heavenly pattern wrought,
Which he had fashion'd in his wise foresight,
He man did make, and breath'd a living spright
Into his face, most beautiful and fair, 111
Endew'd with wisdom, riches heavenly rare.

Such he him made, that he resembled might
Himself, as mortal thing immortal could ;
Him to be lord of every living wight 115
He made by love out of his own like mould,
In whom he might his mighty self behold ;
For Love doth love the thing belov'd to see,
That like it self in lovely shape may be.

But man, forgetful of his maker's grace 120
No less than angels, whom he did ensue,
Fell from the hope of promis'd heavenly place,
Into the mouth of Death, to sinners due,
And all his off-spring into thraldom threw,
Where they for ever should in bonds remain 125
Of never-dead yet ever-dying pain.

Till that great Lord of Love, which him at first
Made of meer love, and after liked well,
Seeing him lie like creature long accurst
In that deep horror of despaired hell, 130
Him, wretch, in dool would let no longer dwell,
But cast out of that bondage to redeem,
And pay the price, all were his debt extreem.

Out of the bosom of eternal bliss,
In which he reigned with his glorious sire, 135
He down descended, like a most demiss
And abject thrall, in flesh's frail attire,
That he for him might pay sin's deadly hire,
And him restore unto that happy state
In which he stood before his hapless fate. 140

In flesh at first the guilt committed was,
Therefore in flesh it must be satisfide;
Nor spirit, nor angel, though they man surpass,
Could make amends to God for man's misguide,
But only man himself, whose self did slide: 145
So taking flesh of sacred virgin's womb,
For man's dear sake he did a man become.

And that most blessed body, which was born
Without all blemish or reproachful blame,
He freely gave to be both rent and torn 150
Of cruel hands, who with despightful shame
Reviling him, that them most vile became,
At length him nayled on a gallow-tree,
And slew the Just by most unjust decree.

O huge and most unspeakable impression 155
Of Love's deep wound, that pierst the piteous heart
Of that dear Lord with so entire affection,
And sharply launcing every inner part,
Dolours of death into his soul did dart,
Doing him die that never it deserved, 160
To free his foes, that from his heast had swerved!

What heart can feel least touch of so sore launch,
Or thought can think the depth of so dear wound?
Whose bleeding source their streams yet never stanch,
But still do flow, and freshly still redownd, 165
To heal the sores of sinful souls unsound,
And cleanse the guilt of that infected crime
Which was enrooted in all fleshly slime.

O blessed Well of Love! O Flowre of Grace!
O glorious Morning-Star! O Lamp of Light! 170
Most lively image of thy Father's face,
Eternal King of Glory, Lord of Might,
Meek Lamb of God, before all worlds behight,
How can we thee requite for all this good?
Or what can prize that thy most precious blood?

Yet nought thou ask'st in lieu of all this love, 176
But love of us, for guerdon of thy pain:
Aye me! what can us less than that behove?
Had he required life for us again,
Had it been wrong to ask his own with gain? 180
He gave us life, he it restored lost;
Then life were least, that us so little cost.

But he our life hath left unto us free,
Free that was thrall, and blessed that was band,
Ne ought demands but that we loving be, 185
As he himself hath lov'd us afore-hand,
And bound thereto with an eternal band,
Him first to love that was so dearly bought,
And next our brethren, to his image wrought.

Him first to love great right and reason is, 190
Who first to us our life and being gave,
And after, when we fared had amiss,
Us wretches from the second death did save;
And last, the food of life, which now we have,
Even he himself, in his dear sacrament, 195
To feed our hungry souls, unto us lent.

Then next, to love our brethren, that were made
Of that self mould and that self Maker's hand
That we, and to the same again shall fade,
Where they shall have like heritage of land, 200
However here on higher steps we stand,
Which also were with self-same price redeemed
That we however of us light esteemed.

And were they not, yet sith that loving Lord
Commanded us to love them for his sake, 205
Even for his sake, and for his sacred word,
Which in his last bequest he to us spake,
We should them love, and with their needs partake,
Knowing that whatsoe'er to them we give,
We give to him by whom we all do live. 210.

Such mercy he by his most holy reed
Unto us taught, and, to approve it true,
Ensampled it by his most righteous deed,
Shewing us mercy (miserable crew!).
That we the like should to the wretches shew, 215.
And love our brethren, thereby to approve
How much himself that loved us we love.

Then rouse thy self, O Earth! out of thy soil,
 In which thou wallow'st like to filthy swine,
 And doost thy mind in durty pleasures moyl, 220
 Undmindful of that dearest Lord of thine;
 Lift up to him thy heavy-clouded eyne,
 That thou this sovereign bounty maist behold,
 And read, through love, his mercies manifold.

Begin from first, where he encradled was 225
 In simple cratch, wrapt in a wad of hay,
 Between the toylful oxe and humble ass,
 And in what rags, and in how base array,
 The glory of our heavenly riches lay,
 When him the silly shepherds came to see, 230
 Whom greatest princes sought on lowest knee.

From thence read on the story of his life,
 His humble carriage, his unfaulty ways,
 His cancred foes, his fights, his toyl, his strife,
 His pains, his poverty, his sharp assays, 235
 Through which he past his miserable dayes,
 Offending none, and doing good to all,
 Yet being malic'd both by great and small.

And look at last, how of most wretched wights
 He taken was, betray'd, and false accus'd, 240
 How with most scornful taunts, and fell despights
 He was revil'd, disgrac'd, and foul abused; [brused;
 How scourg'd, how crown'd, how buffeted, how
 And, lastly, how 'twixt robbers crucifide, [side!
 With bitter wound through hands, through feet, and

Then let thy flinty heart, that feels no pain, 246
Empierced be with pitiful remorse,
And let thy bowels bleed in every vein
At sight of his most sacred heavenly corse,
So torn and mangled with malicious force; 250
And let thy soul, whose sins his sorrows wrought,
Melt into tears, and grone in grieved thought.

With sense whereof, whilst so thy softned spirit
Is inly toucht, and humbled with meek zeal
Through meditation of his endless merit, 255
Lift up thy mind to th' Author of thy weal,
And to his sovereign mercy do appeal;
Learn him to love that loved thee so dear,
And in thy breast his blessed image bear.

With all thy heart, with all thy soul and mind, 260
Thou must him love, and his becheasts embrace;
All other loves, with which the world doth blind
Weak fancies, and stir up affections base,
Thou must renounce and utterly displace,
And give thy self unto him full and free, 265
That full and freely gave himself for thee.

Then shalt thou feel thy spirit so possest,
And ravisht with devouring great desire
Of his dear self, that shall thy feeble breast
Inflame with love, and set thee all on fire 270
With burning zeal, through every part entire,
That in no earthly thing thou shalt delight,
But in his sweet and amiable sight.

Thenceforth all world's desire will in thee die,
And all earth's glory, on which men do gaze, 275
Seem durt and dross in thy pure-sighted eye,
Compar'd to that celestial beauty's blaze,
Whose glorious beams all fleshly sense doth daze
With admiration of their passing light,
Blinding the eyes, and lumining the spright. 280

Then shall thy ravisht soul inspired be
With heavenly thoughts, far above humane skill,
And thy bright radiant eyes shall plainly see
Th' idee of his pure glory present still
Before thy face, that all thy spirits shall fill 285
With sweet enragement of celestial love,
Kindled through sight of those fair things above. 287

AN HYMN

ON HEAVENLY BEAUTY.

RAPT with the rage of mine own ravisht thought,
Through contemplation of those goodly sights,
And glorious images in heaven wrought,
Whose wondrous beauty, breathing sweet delights,
Do kindle love in high conceited sprights, 5
I fain to tell the things that I behold,
But feel my wits to fail, and tongue to fold.

Vouchsafe then, O thou most Almighty Spright!
From whom all gifts of wit and knowledge flow,
To shed into my breast some sparkling light 10
Of thine eternal truth, that I may show
Some little beames to mortal eyes below
Of that immortal beauty, there with thee,
Which in my weak distraughted mind I see;

That with the glory of so goodly sight 15
The hearts of men, which fondly here admire
Fair-seeming shews, and feed on vain delight,
'Transported with celestial desire
Of those fair forms, may lift themselves up higher,
And learn to love, with zealous humble duty, 20
Th' eternal fountain of that heavenly Beauty.

Beginning then below, with th'easie view
Of this base world, subject to fleshly eye,
From thence to mount aloft by order due,
To contemplation of th'immortal skye; 25
Of the soar faulcon so I learn to flye,
That flags a while her fluttering wings beneath,
Till she herself for stronger flight can breathe.

Then look who list, thy gazeeful eyes to feed
With sight of that is fair, look on the frame 30
Of this wide universe, and therein reed
The endless kinds of creatures which by name
Thou canst not count, much less their natures aim,
All which are made with wondrous wise respect,
And all with admirable beauty deckt. 35

First, the earth, on adamantine pillers founded
Amid the sea, engirt with brasen bands,
Then th'air still flitting, but yet firmly bounded
On every side, with piles of flaming brands,
Never consum'd, nor quencht with mortal hands;
And, last, that mighty shining crystal wall, 41
Wherewith he hath encompassed this all.

By view whereof it plainly may appear,
That still as every thing doth upward tend,
And further is from earth, so still more clear 45
And fair it grows, till to his perfect end
Of purest Beauty it at last ascend;
Ayr more than water, fire much more than ayr,
And heayen than fire, appears more pure and fair.

Look thou no further, but affix thine eye 50
On that bright shiny round still-moving mass,
The house of blessed Gods, which men call Skye,
All sow'd with glistring stars more thick than grass,
Whereof each other doth in brightness pass,
But those two most, which ruling night and day, 55
As king and queen the heaven's empire sway ;

And tell me then, what hast thou ever seen
That to their beauty may compared be,
Or can the sight that is most sharp and keen
Endure their captain's flaming head to see ? 60
How much less those, much higher in degree,
And so much fairer, and much more than these,
As these are fairer than the land and seas ?

For far above these heavens which here we see
Be others far exceeding these in light, 65
Not bounded, not corrupt, as these same be,
But infinite in largeness and in height,
Unmoving, uncorrupt, and spotless bright,
That need no sun t'illuminate their spheres,
But their own native light far passing theirs. 70

And as these heavens still by degrees arise,
Until they come to their first Mover's bound,
That in his mighty compass doth comprise,
And carry all the rest with him around,
So those likewise do by degrees redound, 75
And rise more fair, till they at last arrive
To the most fair, whereto they all do strive.

Fair is the heaven where happy souls have place;
In full enjoyment of felicity,
Whence they do still behold the glorious face 80
Of the divine eternal Majesty ;
More fair is that where those ideas on his
Enranged be which Plato so admired,
And pure intelligences from God inspired.

Yet fairer is that heaven in which do reign 85
The sovereign powers and mighty potentates,
Which in their high protections do contain
All mortal princes and imperial states ;
And fairer yet, whereas the royal seats
And heavenly dominations are set, 90
From whom all earthly governance is fet.

Yet far more fair be those bright cherubims,
Which all with golden wings are over-dight,
And those eternal burning seraphims,
Which from their faces dart out fiery light ; 95
Yet fairer than they both, and much more bright,
Be th'angels and archangels, which attend
On God's own person without rest or end.

These thus in fair each other far excelling,
As to the highest they approach more near, 100
Yet is that highest far beyond all telling,
Fairer than all the rest which there appear,
Though all their beauties joyn'd together were ;
How then can mortal tongue hope to express
The image of such endless perfectness ? 105

Cease then, my tongue ! and lend unto my mind
Leave to bethink how great that Beauty is
Whose utmost parts so beautiful I find ;
How much more those essential parts of his,
His truth, his love, his wisdom, and his bliss, 110
His grace, his doom, his mercy, and his might,
By which he lends us of himself a sight !

Those unto all he daily doth display,
And shew himself in th' image of his grace,
As in a looking-glass, through which he may 115
Be seen of all his creatures vile and base,
That are unable else to see his face,
His glorious face ! which glistereth else so bright,
That th' angels selves cannot endure his sight.

But we, frail wights ! whose sight cannot sustain 120
The sun-bright beams when he on us doth shine,
But that their points rebutted back again
Are dull'd, how can we see with feeble eyne
The glory of that majesty divine,
In sight of whom both sun and moon are dark, 125
Compar'd to his least resplendent spark ?

The means, therefore, which unto us is lent
Him to behold, is on his works to look,
Which he hath made in beauty excellent,
And in the same, as in a brasen book, 130
To read enregistred in every nook
His goodness, which his Beauty doth declare ;
For all that's good is beautiful and fair.

Thence gathering plumes of perfect speculation,
To imp the wings of thy high-flying mind, 135
Mount up aloft through heavenly contemplation,
From this dark world, whose damps the soul do blind,
And like the native brood of eagles kind,
On that bright Sun of Glory fix thine eyes,
Clear'd from gross mists of frail infirmities. 140

Humbled with fear and awful reverence,
Before the footstool of his majesty
Throw thy self down, with trembling innocence,
Ne dare look up with corruptible eye
On the drad face of that great Deity, 145
For fear lest if he chance to look on thee
Thou turn to nought, and quite confounded be.

But lowly fall before his mercy-seat,
Close cover'd with the Lamb's integrity
From the just wrath of his avengeful threat 150
That sits upon the righteous throne on high ;
His throne is built upon eternity,
More firm and durable than steel or brass,
Or the hard diamond, which them both doth pass.

His scepter is the rod of righteousness, 155
With which he bruseth all his foes to dust,
And the great Dragon strongly doth repress,
Under the rigour of his judgment just ;
His seat is Truth, to which the faithful trust,
From whence proceed her beams so pure and bright,
That all about him sheddeth glorious light. 161

Light far exceeding that bright blazing spark
Which darted is from Titan's flaming head,
That with his beams enlumineth the dark
And dampish air, whereby all things are red, 165
Whose nature yet so much is marvelled
Of mortal wits, that it doth much amaze
The greatest wisards which thereon do gaze.

But that immortal light which there doth shine
Is many thousand times more bright, more clear,
More excellent, more glorious, more divine, 171
Through which to God all mortal actions here,
And even the thoughts of men, do plain appear ;
For from th' eternal Truth it doth proceed,
Through heavenly vertue which her beams do breed.

With the great glory of that wondrous light 176
His throne is all encompassed around,
And hid in his own brightness from the sight
Of all that look thereon with eyes unsound ;
And underneath his feet are to be found 180
Thunder, and lightning, and tempestuous fire,
The instruments of his avenging ire.

There in his bosom Sapience doth sit,
The sovereign dearling of the Deity,
Clad like a queen in royal robes, most fit 185
For so great powre and peerless majesty,
And all with gems and jewels gorgeously
Adorn'd, that brighter than the stars appear,
And make her native brightness seem more clear.

And on her head a crown of purest gold 190
Is set, in sign of highest sovereignty,
And in her hand a scepter she doth hold,
With which she rules the house of God on high,
And menageth the ever-moving sky,
And in the same these lower creatures all 195
Subjected to her powre imperial.

Both heaven and earth obey unto her will,
And all the creatures which they both contain,
For of her fulness which the world doth fill
They all partake, and do in state remain 200
As their great Maker did at first ordain,
Through observation of her high behest,
By which they first were made and still increast.

'The fairness of her face no tongue can tell,
For she the daughters of all women's race, 205
And angels eke, in beauty doth excell,
Sparkled on her from God's own glorious face,
And more increast by her own goodly grace,
That it doth far exceed all humane thought,
Ne can on earth compared be to ought. 210

Ne could that painter (had he lived yet)
Which pictur'd Venus with so curious quill,
That all posterity admired it,
Have pourtray'd this, for all his maistring skill;
Ne she her self, had she remained still, 215
And were as fair as fabling wits do feign,
Could once come near this Beauty sovereign.

But had those wits, the wonders of their days,
Or that sweet Teian poet, which did spend
His plenteous vein in setting forth her praise, 220
Seen but a glimpse of this which I pretend,
How wondrously would he her face commend,
Above that idole of his faining thought,
That all the world should with his rimes be fraught!

How then dare I, the novice of his art, 225
Presume to picture so divine a wight,
Or hope t' express her least perfection's part,
Whose beauty fills the heavens with her light,
And darks the earth with shadow of her sight?
Ah, gentle Muse! thou art too weak and faint 230
The pourtrait of so heavenly hue to paint.

Let angels, which her goodly face behold
And see at will, her sovereign praises sing,
And those most sacred mysteries unfold
Of that fair love of mighty Heaven's King; 235
Enough is me t' admire so heavenly thing,
And being thus with her huge love possest,
In th' only wonder of herself to rest.

But whoso may, thrice happy man him hold,
Of all on earth whom God so much doth grace, 240
And lets his own beloved to behold;
For in the view of her celestial face
All joy, all bliss, all happiness have place;
Ne ought on earth can want unto the wight
Who of her self can win the wishful sight. 245

For she, out of her secret treasury,
Plenty of riches forth on him will pour,
Even heavenly riches, which there hidden lie
Within the closet of her chastest bowre,
Th' eternal portion of her precious dowre, 250
Which mighty God hath given to her free,
And to all those which thereof worthy be.

None thereof worthy be but those whom she
Vouchsafeth to her presence to receive,
And letteth them her lovely face to see, 255
Whereof such wondrous pleasures they conceive,
And sweet contentment, that it doth bereave
Their soul of sense through infinite delight,
And them transport from flesh into the spright.

In which they see such admirable things, 260
As carries them into an extasy,
And hear such heavenly notes and carolings
Of God's high praise, that fills the brasen sky,
And feel such joy and pleasure inwardly,
That maketh them all worldly cares forget, 265
And only think on that before them set.

Ne from thenceforth doth any fleshly sense
Or idle thought of earthly things remain,
But all that earst seem'd sweet seems now offence,
And all that pleased earst now seems to pain : 270
Their joy, their comfort, their desire, their gain,
Is fixed all on that which now they see ;
All other sights but fained shadows be.

And that fair lamp which useth to enflame
The hearts of men with self-consuming fire, 275
Thenceforth seems foul, and full of sinful blame;
And all that pomp to which proud minds aspire
By name of Honour, and so much desire,
Seems to them baseness, and all riches dross,
And all mirth sadness, and all lucre loss. 280

So full their eyes are of that glorious sight,
And senses fraught with such satietie,
That in nought else on earth they can delight,
But in the aspect of that felicitie,
Which they have written in their inward eye, 285
On which they feed, and in their fast'ned mind
All happy joy and full contentment find.

Ah, then, my hungry Soul! which long hast fed
On idle fancies of my foolish thought,
And with false Beauty's flattering bait misled, 290
Hast after vain deceitful shadows sought,
Which all are fled, and now have left thee nought
But late repentance through thy folly's prief,
Ah! cease to gaze on matter of thy grief.

And look at last up to that sovereign light 295
From whose pure beams all perfect Beauty springs,
That kindleth love in every godly spright,
Even the love of God, which loathing brings
Of this vile world and these gay-seeming things;
With whose sweet pleasures being so possest,
Thy straying thoughts henceforth for ever rest. 301

THE VISIONS

OF

PETRARCH.

I.

BEING one day at my window all alone,
So many strange things happened me to see,
As much it grieveth me to think thereon.
At my right hand a hind appear'd to me,
So fair as mote the greatest god dèlite ;
Two eager dogs did her pursue in chace,
Of which the one was black, the other white :
With deadly force so in their cruel race
They pincht the haunches of that gentle beast,
That at the last, and in short time I spide,
Under a rock where she, alas ! opprest,
Fell to the ground, and there untimely dide.
Cruel death vanquishing so noble beauty,
Oft makes me wail so hard a destiny.

II.

After at sea a tall ship did appear,
Made all of heben and white ivory ;
The sails of gold : of silk the tackle were ;
Mild was the wind, calm seem'd the sea to be,
The sky each where did show full bright and fair :
With rich treasures this gay ship fraited was,
But sudden storm did so turmoil the air,
And tumbled up the sea, that she (alas !)
Strake on a rock that under water lay,
And perished past all recovery.
O how great ruth and sorrowful assay
Doth vex my spirit with perplexity,
Thus in a moment to see lost and dround
So great riches as like cannot be found !

III.

The heavenly branches did I see arise
Out of the fresh and lusty laurel-tree,
Amidst the young green wood of Paradise ;
Some noble plant I thought my self to see :
Such store of birds therein yshrouded were,
Chanting in shade their sundry melody,
That with their sweetness I was ravisht nere.
While on this laurel fixed was mine eye,
The sky 'gan every where to over-cast,
And darkned was the welkin all about,
When sudden flash of heaven's fire out-brast,
And rent this royal tree quite by the root ;
Which makes me much and ever to complain,
For no such shadow shall be had again.

IV.

Within this wood, out of a rock, did rise
A spring of water, mildly tumbling down,
Whereto approached not in any wise
The homely shepherd nor the ruder clown,
But many muses and the nymphs withal,
That sweetly in accord did tune their voyce
To the soft sounding of the waters fall,
That my glad heart thereat did much rejoyce.
But while therein I took my chief delight,
I saw (alas !) the gaping earth devour
The spring, the place, and all clean out of sight,
Which yet aggrieves my heart even to this hour,
And wounds my soul with ruful memory,
'To see such pleasures gone so suddenly.

V.

I saw a phoenix in the wood alone,
With purple wings and crest of golden hue ;
Strange bird he was, whereby I thought anone,
That of some heavenly wight I had the view,
Until he came unto the broken tree,
And to the spring that late devoured was.
What say I more ? Each thing at last we see
Doth pass away : the phoenix there (alas !)
Spying the tree destroid, the water dride,
Himself smote with his beak, as in disdain,
And so forthwith in great despite he dide,
That yet my heart burns in exceeding pain,
For ruth and pity of so hapless plight.
O let mine eyes no more see such a sight !

VI.

At last, so fair a lady did I spy,
That thinking yet on her I burn and quake ;
On herbs and flowres she walked pensively,
Mild, but yet love she proudly did forsake :
White seem'd her robes, yet woven so they were,
As snow and gold together had been wrought.
Above the waste a dark cloud shrouded her,
A stinging serpent by the heel her caught,
Wherewith she languisht as the gather'd flowre,
And well assur'd she mounted up to joy.
Alas ! on earth so nothing doth endure,
But bitter grief and sorrowful annoy,
Which make this life wretched and miserable,
Tossed with storms of fortune variable.

VII.

When I beheld this tickle trustless state
Of vain world's glory, flitting to and fro,
And mortal men tossed by troublous Fate,
In restless seas of wretchedness and woe,
I wish I might this weary life forgo,
And shortly turn unto my happy rest,
Where my free spirit might not any mo
Be vext with sights that do her peace molest.
And ye, fair Lady ! in whose bounteous brest
All heavenly grace and vertue shrined is,
When ye these rimes do read, and view the rest,
Loath this base world, and think of heaven's bliss :
And though ye be the fairest of God's creatures,
Yet think that death shall spoil your goodly features.

THE VISIONS

OF

BELLAY.

I.

IT was the time when Rest, soft sliding down
From heaven's height into mens' heavy eyes,
In the forgetfulness of sleep doth drown
The careful thoughts of mortal miseries,
Then did a ghost before mine eyes appear,
On that great river's bank that runs by Rome,
Which calling me by name, bade me to rear
My looks to heaven, whence all good gifts do come;
And crying loud, lo, now behold (quoth he)
What under this great temple placed is !
Lo, all is nought but flying vanity !
So I, that know this world's inconstancies,
Sith only God surmounts all times decay,
In God alone my confidence do stay.

II.

On high hill's top I saw a stately frame,
 An hundred cubits high by just assize,
 With hundred pillours fronting fair the same,
 All wrought with diamond after Dorick wize :
 Nor brick nor marble was the wall in view,
 But shining crystal, which from top to base
 Out of her womb a thousand rayons threw,
 One hundred steps of Afric gold's enchase :
 Gold was the parget, and the cieling bright
 Did shine all scaly with great plates of gold ;
 The floor of jasp and emerauld was dight.
 O world's vainness ! whiles thus I did behold,
 An earthquake shook the hill from lowest seat,
 And overthrew this frame with ruine great.

III.

Then did a sharped spire of diamond bright,
 Ten feet each way in square, appear to me,
 Justly proportion'd up unto his hight,
 So far as archer might his level see ;
 The top thereof a pot did seem to bear,
 Made of the metal which we all do honour,
 And in this golden vessel couched were
 The ashes of a mighty emperour.
 Upon four corners of the base were ight,
 To bear the frame, four lyons great, of gold,
 A worthy tomb for such a worthy wight :
 Alas ! this world doth nought but grievance hold.
 I saw a tempest from the heaven descend,
 Which this brave monument with flash did rend.

IV.

I saw rais'd up on ivory pillors tall,
Whose bases were of richest metals wark,
The chapters alablaster, the fryses crystal,
The double front of a triumphal ark :
On each side pourtraid was a Victory,
Clad like a nymph, that wings of silver wears,
And in triumphant chair was set on hy
The antient glory of the Roman peers.
No work it seem'd of earthly craftsman's wit,
But rather wrought by his own industry
That thunder darts for Jove his sire, doth fit.
Let me no more see fair thing under sky,
Sith that mine eyes hath seen so fair a sight
With sudden fall to dust consumed quight.

V.

Then was the fair Dodonian tree far seen,
Upon seven hills to spread his gladsom gleam,
And conquerors bedecked with his green,
Along the banks of the Ausonian stream :
There many an ancient trophy was address'd,
And many a spoil, and many a goodly show,
Which that brave race's greatness did attest,
That whilom from the Trojan blood did flow.
Ravisht I was so rare a thing to view,
When, lo ! a barbarous troupe of clownish fone
The honour of these noble boughs down threw ;
Under the wedge I heard the trunk to groan ;
And since I saw the root in great disdain
A twin of forked trees send forth again.

VI.

I saw a wolf under a rocky cave
Nursing two whelps ; I saw her little ones
In wanton dalliance the teat to crave,
While she her neck wreath'd from them for the nones :
I saw her range abroad to seek her food,
And roming through the field with greedy rage
T'embrew her teeth and claws with lukewarm blood
Of the small heards, her thirst for to assuage :
I saw a thousand huntsmen, which descended
Down from the mountains bord'ring Lombardy,
'That with an hundred spears her flank wide rended :
I saw her on the plain outstretched lie,
Throwing out thousand throbs in her own soil,
Soon on a tree uphang'd I saw her spoil.

VII.

I saw the bird that can the sun endure,
With feeble wings assay to mount on hight,
By more and more she 'gan her wings t'assure,
Following th'ensample of her mother's sight,
I saw her rise, and with a larger flight
To pierce the clouds, and with wide pinneons
To measure the most haughty mountain's hight,
Until she raught the god's own mansions ;
There was she lost when suddain I beheld,
Where tumbling through the air in fiery fold,
All flaming down she on the plain was feld,
And soon her body turn'd to ashes cold.
I saw the fowl that doth the light despise,
Out of her dust like to a worm arise.

VIII.

I saw a river swift, whose foamy billows
Did wash the ground-work of an old great wall ;
I saw it cover'd all with grisly shadows,
That with black horror did the air appall :
There-out a strange beast with seven heads arose,
That towns and castles under her breast did cour,
And seem'd both milder beasts and fiercer foes.
Alike with equal ravin to devour.
Much was I maz'd to see this monster's kind
In hundred forms to change his fearful hue,
Whenas at length I saw the wrathful wind,
Which blows cold storms, burst out of Scythian mew,
That sperst these clouds, and in so short as thought,
This dreadful shape was vanished to nought.

IX.

Then all astonied with this mighty ghoad,
An hideous body big and strong I saw,
With side-long beard, and locks down hanging loast,
Stern face, and front full of Saturn-like awe,
Who leaning on the belly of a pot,
Pour'd forth a water whose out-gushing flood
Ran bathing all the creaky shore afloat,
Whereon the 'Trojan prince spilt Turnus' blood ;
And at his feet a bitch-wolf suck did yield
To two young babes : his left the palm-tree stout,
His right hand did the peaceful olive wield,
And head with laurel garnisht was about :
Sudden both palm and olive fell away,
And fair green laurel-branch did quite decay.

X.

Hard by a river's side a virgin fair,
Folding her arms to heaven with thousand throbs,
And outraging her cheeks and golden hair,
To falling rivers' sound thus tun'd her sobs.
Where is (quoth she) this whilom honored face?
Where the great glory and the ancient praise
In which all worlds felicity had place,
When gods and men my honour up did raise?
Suffic'd it not that civil wars me made
The whole world's spoil, but that this hydra new,
Of hundred Hercules' to be assaid,
With seven heads, budding monstrous crimes anew,
So many Neroes and Caligulas
Out of these crooked shores must daily raise?

XI.

Upon an hill a bright flame I did see,
Waving aloft with triple point to sky,
Which like incense of precious cedar tree,
With balmy odours fill'd th'air far and nigh:
A bird all white, well feather'd on each wing,
Here-out up to the throne of gods did fly,
And all the way most pleasant notes did sing,
Whilst in the smoke she unto heaven did sty.
Of this fair fire the scattered rays forth threw
On every side a thousand shining beams,
When sudden dropping of a silver dew [flames,
(O grieyous chance!) gan quench those precious
That it which earst so pleasant scent did yield,
Of nothing now but noyous sulphur smeld.

XII.

I saw a spring out of a rock forth rill,
As clear as crystal, 'gainst the sunny beams,
The bottom yellow, like the golden grail
That bright Pactolus washt with his streams ;
It seem'd that Art and Nature had assembled
All pleasures there for which man's heart could long,
And there a noise alluring sleep soft trembled,
Of many accords, more sweet than mermaids' song :
The seats and benches shone of ivory,
And hundred nymphs sat side by side about,
When from nigh hills, with hideous outcry,
A troupe of satyrs in the place did rout,
Which with their villain feet the stream did ray,
'Threw down the seats, and drove the nymphs away.

XIII.

Much richer than that vessel seem'd to be
Which did to that sad Florentine appear,
Casting mine eyes far off, I chanc'd to see,
Upon the Latine coast her self to rear ;
But suddenly arose a tempest great,
Bearing close envy to these riches rare,
Which 'gan assail this ship with dreadful threat,
This ship, to which none other might compare ;
And finally, the storm impetuous
Sunk up these riches, second unto none,
Within the gulf of greedy Nereus :
I saw both ship and mariners each one,
And all that treasure, drowned in the main ;
But I the ship saw after rais'd again.

XIV.

Long having deeply gron'd these visions sad,
I saw a city like unto that same
Which saw the messenger of tidings glad,
But that on sand was built the goodly frame :
It seem'd her top the firmament did raise,
And no less rich than fair, right worthy sure
(If ought here worthy) of immortal days,
Or if ought under heaven might firm endure.
Much wondered I to see so fair a wall,
When from the northern coast a storm arose,
Which breathing fury from his inward gall
On all, which did against his course oppose,
Into a cloud of dust sperst in the air
The weak foundations of this city fair.

XV.

At length, even at the time when Morpheus
Most truly doth unto her eyes appear,
Weary to see the heavens still wavring thus,
I saw 'Typhæus' sister coming near,
Whose head full bravely with a morion hid,
Did seem to match the gods in majestie ;
She by a river's bank, that swift down slid,
O'er all the world did raise a trophee hie ;
An hundred vanquisht kings under her lay,
With arms bound at their backs in shameful wise.
Whilst I thus mazed was with great affray,
I saw the heavens in war against her rise,
Then down she stricken fell with clap of thonder,
That with great noise I wakt in sudden wonder.

VISIONS
OF
THE WORLD'S VANITY.

I.

ONE day, whiles that my daily cares did sleep,
My spirit, shaking off her earthly prison,
Began to enter meditation deep
Of things exceeding reach of common reason,
Such as this age, in which all good is geason,
And all that humble is and mean debac'd,
Hath brought forth in her last declining season,
Grief of good minds to see goodness disgrac'd :
On which whenas my thought was throughly plac'd,
Unto my eyes strange shows presented were,
Picturing that which I in mind embrac'd,
That yet those sights empassion me full nere :
Such as they were (fair Lady !) take in worth,
That when time serves may bring things better forth.

II.

In summer's day, when Phœbus fairly shone,
I saw a bull as white as driven snow,
With gilden horns embowed like the moon,
In a fresh flowring meadow lying low ;
Up to his ears the verdant grass did grow,
And the gay flowres did offer to be eaten,
But he with fatness so did overflow,
That he, all wallowed in the weeds down beaten,
Ne car'd with them his dainty lips to sweeten ;
Till that a brize, a scorned little creature,
Through his fair hide his angry sting did threaten,
And vext so sore, that all his goodly feature
And all his plenteous pasture nought him pleased :
So by the small the great is oft diseased.

III.

Beside the fruitful share of muddy Nile,
Upon a sunny bank outstretched lay,
In monstrous length, a mighty crocodile,
That, cramm'd with guiltless blood and greedy pray
Of wretched people travailing that way,
Thought all things less than his disdainful pride :
I saw a little bird, call'd Tedula,
The least of thousands which on earth abide,
That forc'd this hideous beast to open wide
The griesly gates of his devouring hell,
And let him feed, as Nature doth provide,
Upon his jaws, that with black venom swell.
Why then should greatest things the least disdain,
Sith that so small so mighty can constrain ?

IV.

The kingly bird, that bears Jove's thunder-clap,
One day did scorn the simple scarabee,
Proud of his highest service and good hap,
That made all other fowls his thralls to be :
The silly fly that no redress did see,
Spy'd where the eagle built his towring nest,
And kindling fire within the hollow tree,
Burnt up his young ones, and himself distrest,
Ne suffer'd him in any place to rest
But drove in Jove's own lap his eggs to lay,
Where gathering also filth him to infest,
Forc'd with the filth his eggs to fling away ;
For which when as the fowl was wroth, said Jove,
Lo ! how the least the greatest may reprove.

V.

Toward the sea turning my troubled eye,
I saw the fish (if fish I may it cleep)
That makes the sea before his face to fly,
And with his flaggy fins doth seem to sweep
The foamy waves out of the dreadful deep,
The huge leviathan, Dame Nature's wonder,
Making his sport, that many makes to weep ;
A sword-fish small him from the rest did sunder,
That in his throat him prickling softly under,
His wide abyss him forced forth to spew,
That all the sea did roar like heaven's thunder,
And all the waves were stain'd with filthy hue.
Hereby I learned have not to despise
What-ever thing seems small in common eyes.

VI.

An hideous dragon, dreadful to behold,
Whose back was arm'd against the dint of spear,
With shields of brass, that shone like burnish'd gold,
And forked sting, that death in it did bear,
Strove with a spider, his unequal peer,
And bad defiance to his enemy :
'The subtil vermin creeping closely near,
Did in his drink shed poison privily,
Which through his intrails spreading diversly,
Made him to swell, that nigh his bowels burst,
And him enforc'd to yield the victory,
That did so much in his own greatness trust.
O how great vainness is it then to scorn
'The weak, that hath the strong so oft forlorn !

VII.

High on a hill a goodly cedar grew,
Of wondrous length and straight proportion;
'That far abroad her dainty odours threw ;
Mongst all the daughters of proud Libanon,
Her match in beauty was not any one :
Shortly within her inmost pith there bred
A little wicked worm, perceiv'd of none,
That on her sap and vital moisture fed :
'Thenceforth her garland, so much honoured,
Began to die, (O great ruth for the same !)
And her fair locks fell from her lofty head,
That shortly bald and bared she became.
I, which this sight beheld, was much dismay'd,
To see so goodly thing so soon decay'd.

VIII.

Soon after this, I saw an elephant,
Adorn'd with bells and bosses gorgeously,
That on his back did bear (as batteilant)
A gilden towre, which shone exceedingly,
That he himself through foolish vanity,
Both for his rich attire and goodly form,
Was puffed up with passing surquedry,
And shortly 'gan all other beasts to scorn ;
Till that a little ant, a silly worm,
Into his nostrils creeping, so him pain'd,
That casting down his towres, he did deform
Both borrow'd pride, and native beauty stain'd.
Let therefore nought that great is therein glory,
Sith so small thing his happiness may vary.

IX.

Looking far forth into the ocean wide,
A goodly ship, with banners bravely dight,
And flag in her top-gallant, I espide,
Through the main sea making her merry flight ;
Fair blew the wind into her bosom right,
And th' heavens looked lovely all the while,
That she did seem to dance, as in delight,
And at her own felicity did smile :
All suddenly there clove unto her keel
A little fish, that men call Remora,
Which stopt her course, and held her by the heel,
That wind nor tide could move her thence away.
Strange thing me seemeth that so small a thing
Should able be so great an one to wring.

X.

A mighty lion, lord of all the wood,
Having his hunger thoroughly satisfy'd,
With prey of beasts and spoil of living blood,
Safe in his dreadless den him thought to hide :
His sternness was his praise, his strength his pride,
And all his glory in his cruel claws :
I saw a wasp, that fiercely him defide,
And bad him battail even to his jaws ;
Sore he him stung, that it the blood forth draws,
And his proud heart is fill'd with fretting ire :
In vain he threats his teeth, his tail, his paws,
And from his bloody eyes doth sparkle fire,
That dead himself he wished for despatch :
So weakest may annoy the most of might.

XI.

What time the Roman empire bore the reign
Of all the world, and flourish'd most in might,
The nations 'gan their sovereignty disdain,
And cast to quit them from their bondage quite ;
So when all shrouded were in silent night,
The Galls were, by corrupting of a maid,
Possess'd nigh of the Capitol through slight,
Had not a goose the treachery bewraid ;
If then a goose great Rome from ruin staid,
And Jove himself, the patron of the place,
Preserv'd from being to his foes betraid,
Why do vain men mean things so much deface,
And in their might repose their most assurance,
Sith nought on earth can challenge long endurance?

XII.

When these sad sights were over-past and gone,
My spright was greatly moved in her rest,
With inward ruth and dear affection,
To see so great things by so small distress:
Thenceforth I 'gan in my engrieved breast
To scorn all difference of great and small,
Sith that the greatest often are opprest,
And unawares do into danger fall.
And ye, that read these Ruines tragical,
Learn by their loss to love the low degree,
And if that fortune chance you up to call
To Honour's seat, forget not what ye be ;
For he that of himself is most secure,
Shall find his state most fickle and unsure.

PROSOPOPOIA:

OR,

MOTHER HUBBERD'S TALE.

To the right Honourable

THE LADY COMPTON AND MOUNTEGLE.

MOST fair and vertuous Lady! having often sought opportunity, by some good means, to make known to your Ladyship the humble affection and faithful duty which I have always professed, and am bound to bear to that house from whence ye spring, I have at length found occasion to remember the same, by making a simple present to you of these my idle labours; which having long sithens composed in the raw conceit of my youth, I lately, amongst other papers, lighted upon, and was by others, which liked the same, moved to set them forth. Simple is the device, and the composition mean, yet carrieth some delight; even the rather because of the simplicity and meanness thus personated. The same I beseech your Ladyship take in good part, as a pledge of that profession which I have made to you, until, with some other more worthy labour, I do redeem it out of your hands, and discharge my utmost duty. Till then, wishing your Ladyship all increase of honour and happiness, I humbly take leave.

Your Ladyship's ever humbly,

ED. SPENSER.

PROSOPOPOIA:

OR,

MOTHER HUBBERD'S TALE.

IT was the month in which the righteous maid,
That for disdain of sinful world's upbraid,
Fled back to heaven, whence she was first conceived,
Into her silver bower the sun received,
And the hot Syrian dog on him awaiting, 5
After the chafed lion's cruel baiting,
Corrupted had th' air with his noisom breath,
And pour'd on th' earth plague, pestilence, and death.
Emongst the rest, a wicked malady
Reign'd emongst men, that many did to die, 10
Depriv'd of sense and ordinary reason,
That it to leeches seemed strange and geason.
My fortune was 'mongst many others moe,
To be partaker of their common woe,
And my weak body set on fire with grief, 15
Was robb'd of rest and natural relief.
In this ill plight there came to visit me
Some friends, who, sorry my sad case to see,
Began to comfort me in chearful wise,
And means of gladsom solace to devise; 20

But seeing kindly Sleep refuse to do
His office, and my feeble eyes forgo,
They sought my troubled sense how to deceive
With talk, that might unquiet fancies reave ;
And sitting all on seats about me round, 25
With pleasant tales (fit for that idle stound)
They cast in course to waste the weary hours :
Some told of ladies and their paramours ;
Some of brave knights and their renowned squires ;
Some of the Fairies and their strange attires ; 30
And some of giants hard to be believed ;
That the delight thereof me much relieved.
Amongst the rest a good old woman was,
Hight Mother Hubberd, who did far surpass
The rest in honest mirth, that seem'd her well : 35
She, when her turn was come her tale to tell,
'Told of a strange adventure that betided
Betwixt the fox and th'ape, by him misguided,
The which for that my sense it greatly pleased,
All were my spirit heavy and diseased, 40
I'll write in terms as she the same did say,
So well as I her words remember may :
No Muse's aid me needs here-to to call ;
Base is the style, and matter mean withal.
Whylom (said she) before the world was civil, 45
The Fox and th'Ape, disliking of their evil
And hard estate, determined to seek
Their fortunes far abroad, lyeke with his lyeke ;
For both were crafty and unhappy witted ;
'Two fellows might no where be better fitted. 50

The Fox, that first his cause of grief did find,
'Gan first thus plain his case with words unkind.
Neighbour Ape, and my Gossip eke beside,
(Both two sure bands in friendship to be ty'd)
To whom may I more trustely complain 55
The evil plight that doth me sore constrain,
And hope thereof to find due remedy ?
Hear then my pain and inward agony.
Thus many years I now have spent and worn
In mean regard and basest fortune's scorn, 60
Doing my country service as I might,
No less, I dare say, than the proudest wight,
And still I hoped to be up advanced
For my good parts, but still it hath mischanced :
Now therefore that no lenger hope I see, 65
But froward fortune still to follow me,
And losels lifted high where I did look,
I mean to turn the next leaf of the book ;
Yet ere that any way I do betake,
I mean my gossip privy first to make. 70

Ah ! my dear Gossip, (answer'd then the Ape)
Deeply do your sad words my wits awhape,
Both for because your grief doth great appear,
And eke because my self am touched near ;
For I likewise have wasted much good time, 75
Still waiting to preferment up to clime,
Whilst others always have before me stept,
And from my beard the fat away have swept,
That now unto despair I 'gin to grow,
And mean for better wind about to throw ; 80

Therefore, to me, my trusty Friend, aread
Thy counsel : two is better than one head.

Certes (said he) I mean me to disguise
In some strange habit, after uncouth wize,
Or like a pilgrim or a lymiter, 85
Or like a gipsen or a juggeler,
And so to wander to the worldes end,
To seek my fortune where I may it mend,
For worse than that I have I cannot meet :
Wide is the world I wote, and every street 90
Is full of fortunes and adventures straunge,
Continuall subject unto chaunge.
Say, my fair Brother, now, if this device
Do like you, or may you to look entice.

Surely (said the Ape) it likes me wondrous well,
And would ye not poor fellowship expell, 96
My self would offer you t'accompany
In this adventure's chancefull jeopardy,
For to wex old at home in idleness
Is disadventrous, and quite fortuneless : 100
Abroad where change is, good may gotten be.

The Fox was glad, and quickly did agree;
So both resolv'd the morrow next ensuing,
So soon as day appear'd to peoples viewing,
On their intended journey to proceed, 105
And over night, what-so thereto did need,
Each did prepare in readiness to be.
The morrow next, so soon as one might see
Light out of heaven's windows forth to look,
Both their habiliments unto them took, 110

And put themselves (a God's name) on their way,
When-as the Ape beginning well to wey
This hard adventure, thus began t'advise.

Now read, sir Reynold, as ye be right wise,
What course ye ween is best for us to take, 115
That for ourselves we may a living make.
Whether shall we profess some trade or skill,
Or shall we vary our device at will,
Even as new occasion appears ?
Or shall we tie ourselves for certain years 120
To any service, or to any place ?
For it behoves, ere that into the race
We enter, to resolve first hereupon.

Now, surely, Brother, (said the Fox anon)
Ye have this matter motioned in season ; 125
For every thing that is begun with reason
Will come by ready means unto his end.
But things miscounselled must needs miswend.
Thus therefore I advise upon the case,
That not to any certain trade or place, 130
Nor any man we should our selves apply ;
For why should he that is at liberty
Make himself bond ? sith then we are free-born,
Let us all servile base subjection scorn,
And as we be sons of the world so wide, 135
Let us our father's heritage divide,
And challenge to our selves our portions dew,
Of all the patrimony, which a few
Now hold in hugger-mugger in their hand,
And all the rest do rob of good and land ; 140

For now a few have all, and all have nought,
Yet all be brethren ylike dearly bought :
There is no right in this partition,
Ne was it so by institution
Ordained first, ne by the law of Nature, 145
But that she gave like blessing to each creature,
As well as worldly livelode as of life,
Thát there might be no difference nor strife,
Nor ought call'd mine or thine : thrice happy then
Was the condition of mortal men : 150
That was the Golden Age of Saturn old,
But this might better be the world of Gold;
For without gold now nothing will be got ;
Therefore (if please you) this shall be our plot ;
We will not be of any occupation, 155
Let such vile vassals, born to base vocation,
Drudge in the world, and for their living droyle,
Which have no wit to live withouten toyle ;
But we will walk about the world at pleasure,
Like two free-men, and make our ease our treasure,
Free-men some beggers call ; but they be free, 161
And they which call them so more beggers be :
For they do swink and sweat to feed the other,
Who live like lords of that which they do gather,
And yet do never thank them for the same, 165
But as their due by Nature do it clame.
Such will we fashion both ourselves to be,
Lords of the world, and so will wander free
Where-so us listeth, uncontroll'd of any :
Hard is our hap if we (emongst so many) 170

Light not on some that may our state amend ;
Sildom but some good cometh ere the end.

Well seem'd the Ape to like this ordinaunce ;
Yet well considering of the circumstaunce,
As pausing in great doubt a while he staid, 175
And afterwards with grave advizement said ;
I cannot, my lief Brother, like but well
The purpose of the complot which ye tell ;
For well I wote (compar'd to all the rest
Of each degree) that beggers' life is best, 180
And they that think themselves the best of all,
Oft-times to begging are content to fall :
But this I wote withal, that we shall ronne
Into great daunger, like to be undonne,
Wildly to wander thus in the world's eye, 185
Withouten passport or good warrantye ;
For fear lest we like rogues should be reputed,
And for ear marked beasts abroad be bruted ;
Therefore I read that we our counsels call,
How to prevent this mischief ere it fall, 190
And how we may with most security,
Beg amongst those that beggers do defy.

Right well, dear Gossip, ye advised have,
(Said then the Fox) but I this doubt will save ;
For ere we farther pass, I will devize 195
A passport for us both in fittest wise,
And by the names of soldiers us protect,
That now is thought a civil begging sect.
Be you the souldier for you likest are
For manly semblance and small skill in war ; 200

I will but wait on you, and as occasion
Falls out, my self fit for the same will fashion.

The passport ended, both they forward went,
The Ape clad souldier-like, fit for th' intent,
In a blue jacket, with a cross of red, 205
And many slits, as if that he had shed
Much blood through many wounds therein received,
Which had the use of his right arm bereaved ;
Upon his head an old Scotch cap he wore,
With a plume feather all to peices tore ; 210
His breaches were made after the new cut,
Al Portugese, loose like an empty gut,
And his hose broken high above the heeling,
And his shooes beaten out with traveling :
But neither sword nor dagger he did bear ; 215
Seems that no foe's revengement he did fear :
In stead of them a hansom bat he held,
On which he leaned, as one far in eld :
Shame light on him that through so false illusion
Doth turn the name of Souldiers to abusíon, 220
And that which is the noblest mysterie,
Brings to reproach and common infamie.

Long they thus travelled, yet never met
Adventure which might them a working set ;
Yet many ways they sought, and many try'd, 225
Yet for their purposes none fit espy'd.
At last they chaunc'd to meet upon the way,
A simple husband-man in garments gray,
Yet though his vesture were but mean and base,
A good yeoman he was, of honest place, 230

And more for thrift did care than for gay clothing :
Gay without good is good heart's greatest loathing.
The Fox him spying bade the Ape him dight
To play his part, for lo he was in sight
That (if he err'd not) should them entertain, 235
And yield them timely profit for their pain.
Eftsoons the Ape himself 'gan to uprear,
And on his shoulders high his bat to bear,
As if good service he were fit to do,
But little thrift for him he did it to ; 240
And stoutly forward he his steps did strain,
That like a handsom swain it him became.
When-as they nigh approached, that good man
Seeing them wander loosely, first began
T'enquire, of custom, what and whence they were?
To whom the Ape, I am a Souldiere, 246
That late in war have spent my dearest blood,
And in long service lost both limbs and good,
And now constrain'd that trade to over-give,
I driven am to seek some means to live ; 250
Which might it you in pity please t'afford,
I would be ready both in deed and word,
To do you faithful service all my days.
This yron world (that same he weeping says)
Brings down the stoutest hearts to lowest state ;
For misery doth bravest minds abate, 256
And make them seek for that they wont to scorn,
Of fortune and of hope at once forlorn.

The honest man, that heard him thus complain,
Was griev'd, as he had felt part of his pain, 260

And, well dispos'd him some relief to show,
Askt if in husbandry he ought did know ;
To plough, to plant, to reap, to rake, to sow,
To hedg, to ditch, to thresh, to thatch, to mow,
Or to what labour else he was prepar'd ? 265
For husband's life is labourous and hard.

When-as the Ape him hear so much to talk
Of labour, that did from his liking balk,
He would have slipt the coller handsomly,
And to him said, Good Sir ! full glad am I 270
To take what pains may any living wight,
But my late maimed limbs lack wonted might
To do their kindly services as needeth ;
Scarce this right hand the mouth with diet feedeth,
So that it may no painful work endure, 275
Ne to strong labour can itself enure ;
But if that any other place you have,
Which asks small pains, but thriftyness to save,
Or care to overlook, or thrust to gather,
Ye may me trust as your own ghostly father. 280
With that the husband-man 'gan him avize,
That it for him was fittest exercise
Cattle to keep, or grounds to oversee.
And asked him if he could willing be
To keep his sheep, or to attend his swine, 285
Or watch his mares, or take his charge of kine ?

Gladly (said he) whatever such like pain
Ye put on me, I will the same sustain ;
But gladliest I of your fleecy sheep
(Might it you please) would take on me to keep ;

For ere that unto arms I me betook, 291
 Unto my father's sheep I us'd to look,
 That yet the skill thereof I have not lost ;
 There-to right well this curdog, by my cost,
 (Meaning the Fox) will serve my sheep to gather,
 And drive to follow after their belwether. 296
 The husband-man was meanly well content
 Tryal to make of his endeavourment,
 And home him leading, lent to him the charge
 Of all his flock, with liberty full large, 300
 Giving account of the annual increase,
 Both of their lambs and of their woolly fleece.

Thus is this Ape become a shepherd swain,
 And the false Fox his dog ; God give them pain,
 For ere the year have half his course out-run, 305
 And do return from whence he first begun,
 They shall him make an ill account of thrift.

Now when-as time flying with winges swift,
 Expired had the term that these two javels
 Should render up a reckning of their travels 310
 Unto their master, which it of them sought,
 Exceedingly they troubled were in thought,
 Ne wist what answer unto him to frame,
 Ne how to escape great punishment or shame
 For their false treason and vile thievery ; 315
 For not a lamb of all their flock's supply
 Had they to shew, but ever as they bred
 They slew them, and upon their fleshs fed ;
 For that disguised dog lov'd blood to spill,
 And drew the wicked shepherd to his will ; 320

So twixt them both they not a lamkin left,
And when lambs fail'd, the old sheep's lives they rest;
That how t'acquit themselves unto their lord
They were in doubt, and flatly set aboard.
The Fox then counsel'd th'Ape for to require 325
Respite till morrow t'answer his desire;
For time's delay new hope of help still breeds,
'The good man granted, doubting nought their deeds,
And bade next day that all should ready be;
But they more subtil meaning had than he; 330
For the next morrow's meed they closely ment,
For fear of afterclaps, for to prevent;
And that same evening, when all shrouded were
In careless sleep, they without care or fear
Cruelly fell upon their flock in fold, 335
And of them slew at pleasure what they wold;
Of which when as they feasted had their fill,
For a full complement of all their ill,
'They stole away, and took their hasty flight,
Carry'd in clouds of all concealing night. 340
So was the husband-man left to his loss,
And they unto their fortune's change to toss.
After which sort they wandered long while,
Abusing many through their cloaked guile,
That at the last they 'gan to be descry'd 345
Of every one, and all their sleights espy'd,
So as their begging now them failed quite,
For none would give, but all men would them wite;
Yet would they take no pains to get their living,
But seek some other way to gain by giving; 350

Much like to begging, but much better named,
For many beg which are thereof ashamed.
And now the Fòx had gotten him a gown,
And th' Ape a cassock side-long hanging down,
For they their occupation meant to change, 355
And now in other state abroad to range ;
For since their souldier's pass no better sped,
They forg'd another, as for clerks book-red :
Who passing forth, as their adventures fell,
Through many haps which needs not here to tell,
At length chanc'd with a formal priest to meet,
Whom they in civil manner first did greet,
And after askt an alms for God's dear love.
The man straight-way his choler up did move,
And with reproachful terms 'gan them revile 365
For following that trade so base and vile,
And askt what licence or what pass they had ?
Ah ! (said the Ape, as sighing wondrous sad)
It's an hard case when men of good deserving
Must either driven be perforce to sterving, 370
Or asked for their pass by every squib
That list at will them to revile or snib ;
And yet (God wote) small odds I often see
'Twixt them that ask and them that asked be.
Nath'less, because you shall not us misdeem, 375
But that we are as honest as we seem,
Ye shall our pasport at your pleasure see,
And then ye will (I hope) well moved be.
Which when the priest beheld, he view'd it nere,
As if therein some text he studying were, 380

But little else (God wote) could thereof skill,
For read he could not evidence nor will,
Ne tell a written word, ne write a letter,
Ne make one tittle worse, ne make one better :
Of such deep learning little had he need, 385
Ne yet of Latin, ne of Greek, that breed
Doubts mongst divines, and difference of texts,
From whence arise divirsity of sects,
And hateful heresies, of God abhor'd ;
But this good Sir did follow the plain word, 390
Ne medled with their controversies vain ;
All his care was his service well to fain,
And to read homelies on holy-days ;
When that was done, he might attend his plays :
An easy life, and fit high God to please. 395
He, having over-lookt their pass at ease,
'Gan at the length them to rebuke again,
'That no good trade of life did entertain
But lost their time in wandring loose abroad,
Seeing the world, in which they bootless boad, 400
Had ways enow for all therein to live,
Such grace did God unto his creatures give.

Said then the Fox, Who hath the world not tride,
From the right way full eath may wander wide ;
We are but novices new come abroad, 405
We have not yet the tract of any troad,
Nor on us taken any state of life,
But ready are of any to make prief : [proved,
Therefore might please you, which the world have
Us to devise, which forth but lately moved, 410

Of some good course, that we might undertake,
Ye shall for ever us your bondmen make.

The priest 'gan wex half proud to be so praid,
And thereby willing to afford them aid ;
It seems (said he) right well that ye be clerks, 415
Both by your witty words and by your werks :
Is not that name enough to make a living
'To him that hath a whit of Nature's giving ?
How many honest men see ye arise
Daily thereby, and grow to goodly prize ? 420
'To deans, to archdeacons, to commissaries,
'To lords, to principals, to prebendaries ?
All jolly prelates, worthy rule to bear,
Who ever them envie ; yet spight bites near :
Why should ye doubt then but that ye likewise
Might unto some of those in time arise ? 426
In the mean time to live in good estate,
Loving that love, and hating those that hate,
Being some honest curate, or some vicar,
Content with little in condition sicker. 430

Ah ! but (said th' Ape) the charge is wondrous great,
To feed mens souls, and hath an heavy threat.
To feed mens souls (quoth he) is not in man,
For they must feed themselves, do what we can ;
We are but charg'd to lay the meat before ; 435
Eat they that list, we need to do no more.
But God it is that feeds them with his grace,
The bread of life pour'd down from heavenly place ;
Therefore, said he, that with the budding rod 439
Did rule the Jews, " All shall be taught of God."

That same hath Jesus Christ now to him raught,
By whom the flock is rightly fed and taught ;
He is the Shepherd, and the Priest is he ;
We but his shepherd swains ordain'd to be :
Therefore herewith do not your self dismay ; 445
Ne is the pains so great but bear ye may ;
For not so great as it was wont of yore
It's now adays, ne half so straight and sore :
They whylom used duly every day
Their service and their holy things to say 450
At morn and even, besides their anthems sweet,
Their peny masses, and their complynes meet,
Their dirges, their trentals, and their shrifts,
Their memories, their singings, and their gifts :
Now all these needless works are laid away ; 455
Now once a week, upon the Sabbath-day,
It is enough to do our small devotion,
And then to follow any merry motion.
Ne are we tyed to fast but when we list,
Ne to wear garments base, of wollen twist, 460
But with the finest silks us to aray,
That before God we may appear more gay,
Resembling Aaron's glory in his place ;
For far unfit it is that persons base
Should with vile clothes approach God's majestic,
Whom no uncleanness may approchen nie ; 466
Or that all men which any master serve,
Good garments for their service should deserve ;
But he that serves the Lord of Hoasts most high,
And that in highest place t'approach him nigh,

And all the people's prayers to present 471
Before his throne, as on ambassage sent
Both to and fro, should not deserve to wear
A garment better than of wool or hair.
Beside, we may have lying by our sides 475
Our lovely lasses, or bright shining brides :
We be not tyde to wilful chastity,
But have the gospel of free liberty.

By that he ended had his ghostly sermon,
The Fox was well enduc'd to be a parson, 480
And of the priest eftsoons 'gan to enquire
How to a benefice he might aspire ?
Marry, there (said the priest) is art indeed ;
Much good deep learning one thereout may reed ;
For that the ground-work is and end of all, 485
How to obtain a beneficial.

First, therefore, when ye have in handsom wise
Your selves attired, as you can devise,
Then to some noble man your self apply,
Or other great one in the worldes eye, 490
That hath a zealous disposition
To God, and so to his religion ;
There must thou fashion eke a goodly zeale,
Such as no carpers may contrayr reveale,
For each thing fained ought more wary be ; 495
There thou must walk in sober gravitie,
And seem as saint-like as Saint Radegund ;
Fast much, pray oft, look lowly on the ground,
And unto every one do curtesie meek.
These looks (nought saying) do a benefice seek, 500

And be thou sure one not to lack ere long,
But if thee^clist unto the Court to throng,
And there to hunt after the hoped prey,
Then must thou thee dispose another way;
For there thou needs must learn to laugh, to lye,
To face, to forge, to scoff to company, 506
To crouch, to please, to be a beetle stock
Of thy great master's will, to scorn, to mock;
So maist thou chance mock out a benefice,
Unless thou canst one conjure by device, 510
Or cast a figure for a bishoprick;
And if one could, it were but a school-trick.
These be the ways by which without reward
Livings in courts be gotten, though full hard;
For nothing there is done without a fee: 515
The courtier needs must recompenced be
With a benevolence, or have in gage
The *primetias* of your parsonage:
Scarce can a bishoprick forpass them by,
But that it must be gelt in privity. 520
Do not thou, therefore, seek a living there,
But of more private persons seek elsewhere
Whereas thou mayst compound a better peny,
Ne let thy learning question'd be of any:
For some good gentleman that hath the right 525
Unto his church for to present a wight,
Will cope with thee in reasonable wise,
'That if the living yearly do arise,
To forty pound, that then his youngest son
Shall twenty have, and twenty thou hast won; 530

Thou hast it won, for it is of frank gift,
And he will care for all the rest to shift,
Both that the bishop may admit of thee,
And that therein thou maist maintained be.
'This is the way for one that is unlearn'd 535

Living to get, and not to be discern'd;
But they that are great clerks, have nearer ways,
For learning-sake to living them to raise:
Yet many eke of them (God wot) are driven
T'accept a benefice in pieces riven. 540

How sayst thou (Friend) have I not well discourst
Upon this common-place (though plain, not wourst)?
Better a short tale than a bad long shriving;
Needs any more to learn to get a living?

Now sure, and by my hallidom, (quoth he) 545
Ye a great master are in your degree;
Great thanks I yield you for your discipline,
And do not doubt but duly to incline
My wits thereto, as ye shall shortly hear.

The priest him wish'd good speed, and well to fare;
So parted they as either's way them led. 551

But th'Ape and Fox e'er long so well them sped,
Through the priest's wholesom counsel lately taught,
And through their own fair handling wisely wrought,
That they a benefice 'twixt them obtained, 555

And crafty Reynold was a priest ordained,
And th'Ape his Parish-Clark procur'd to be;
Then made they revel-rout and goodly glee:
But e'er long time had passed, they so ill
Did order their affairs, that th'evil-will 560

Of all their parish'ners they had constrain'd,
Who to the Ordinary of them complain'd,
How foully they their offices abus'd,
And them of crimes and heresies accus'd,
That Pursivants he often for them sent; 565
But they neglecting his commandement,
So long persisted obstinate and bold,
Till at the length he published to hold
A Visitation, and them cited thether;
Then was high time their wits about to gether; 570
What did they then but made a composition
With their next neighbour priest for light condition,
To whom their living they resigned quight
For a few pence, and ran away by night.
So passing through the country in disguise, 575
They fled far off, where none might them surprize,
And after that long strayed here and there,
Through every field and forest far and near,
Yet never found occasion for their tourn,
But almost starv'd, did much lament and mourn.
At last they chanc'd to meet upon the way 581
The mule all deck'd in goodly rich array,
With bells and bosses that full loudly rung,
And costly trappings that to ground down hung:
Lowly they him saluted in meek wise, 585
But he through pride and fatness 'gan despise
Their meanness, scarce vouchsaf'd them to requite:
Whereat the Fox, deep groling in his sprite,
Said, Ah! Sir Mule, now blessed be the day
That I see you so goodly and so gay 590

In your attires, and eke your silken hyde
Fill'd with round flesh, that every bone doth hide;
Seems that in fruitful pastures ye do live,
Or Fortune doth you secret favour give.

Foolish Fox (said the Mule) thy wretched need
Praise the thing that doth thy sorrow breed, 596
For well I ween thou canst not but envy
My wealth, compar'd to thine own misery,
That art so lean and meagre waxen late,
That scarce thy legs uphold thy feeble gate. 600

Ay me! (said then the Fox) whom evil hap
Unworthy in such wretchedness doth wrap,
And makes the scorn of other beasts to be:
But read (fair Sir! of grace) from whence come ye?
Or what of tydings you abroad do hear? 605
News may perhaps some good unweeting bear.

From royal court I lately came (said he)
Where all the bravery that eye may see,
And all the happiness that heart desire,
Is to be found: he nothing can admire 610
That hath not seen that heaven's pourtracture;
But tydings there is none, I you assure,
Save that which common is, and known to all,
That courtiers, as the tide, do rise and fall.

But tell us (said the Ape) we do you pray, 615
Who now in court doth bear the greatest sway?
That if such fortune do to us befall,
We may seek favour of the best of all.

Marry (said he) the highest now in grace
Be the wild beasts that swiftest are in chace, 620

For in their speedy course and nimble flight
The lion now doth take the most delight,
But chiefly joys on foot them to behold,
Enchaste with chain and circulet of gold;
So wild a beast so tame ytaught to be, 625
And buxom to his bands, is joy to see ;
So well his golden circlet him beseemeth,
But his late chain his liege unmeet esteemeth,
For so brave beasts he loveth best to see
In the wild forest raunging fresh and free : 630
Therefore if fortune thee in court to live,
In case thou ever there will hope to thrive,
To some of these thou must thy self apply,
Else as a thistle-down in th' air doth fly,
So vainly shalt thou to and fro be tost, 635
And lose thy labour and thy fruitless cost :
And yet full few that follow them I see
For vertue's bare regard advaunced be,
But either for some gainful benefit,
Or that they may for their own turns be fit; 640
Nathless, perhaps, ye things may handle so,
That ye may better thrive than thousands moe.

But (said the Ape) how shall we first come in,
That after we may favour seek to win ?

How else (said he) but with a good bold face, 645
And with big words, and with a stately pace,
That men may think of you in general,
That to be in you which is not at all :
For not by that which is the world now deemeth,
(As it was wont) but by that same that seemeth :

Ne do I doubt but that ye well can fashion 651
Your selves therto according to occasion:
So fare ye well, good courtiers may ye be;
So proudly neighing, from them parted he.

Then 'gan this crafty couple to devize 655
How for the court themselves they might agize,
For thither they themselves meant to address,
In hope to find their happier success:
So well they shifted, that the Ape anon
Himself had cloathed like a gentleman, 660
And the sly Fox, as like to be his groome,
That to the court in speedy sort they come;
Where the fond Ape himself uprearing high
Upon his tiptoes, stalketh stately by,
As if he were some great Magnifico, 665

And boldly doth amongst the boldest go;
And his man Reynold, with fine counterfesaunce,
Supports his credit and his countenance.
Then 'gan the courtiers gaze on every side,
And stare on him with big looks basen wide, 670
Wondring what mister wight he was, and whence,
For he was clad in strange accoustrements,
Fashion'd with queint devises, never seen
In court before, yet there all fashions been;
Yet he them in newfangleness did pass: 675

But his behaviour altogether was
Alla turchesca, much the more admir'd,
And his looks loftie, as if he aspir'd
To dignity, and 'sdeign'd the low degree,
That all which did such strangeness in him see, 680

By secret means 'gan of his state enquire,
And privily his servant thereto hire,
Who, throughly arm'd against such coverture,
Reported unto all that he was sure
A noble gentleman of high regard, 685
Which through the world had with long travel far'd,
And seen the manners of all beasts on ground,
Now here arriv'd, to see if like he found.

Thus did the Ape at first him credit gain,
Which afterwards he wisely did maintain 690
Will gallant show, and daily more augment
'Through his fine feats and courtly complement ;
For he could play, and dance, and vaute, and spring,
And all that else pertains to revelling,
Only through kindly aptness of his joints : 695
Besides, he could do many other points,
The which in court him served to good stead ;
For he 'mongst ladies could their fortunes read
Out of their hands, and merry leasings tell,
And juggle finely, that became him well ; 700
But he so light was at leger-demain,
That what he touch'd came not to light again :
Yet would he laugh it out, and proudly look,
And tell them that they greatly him mistook :
So would he scoff them out with mockery, 705
For he therein had great felicity,
And with sharp quips joy'd others to deface,
Thinking that their disgracing did him grace ;
So whilst that other like vain wits he pleased,
And made to laugh, his heart was greatly eased. 710

But the right gentle mind would bite his lip,
To hear the javel so good men to nip ;
For though the vulgar yield an open ear,
And common courtiers love to gybe and fear
At every thing which they hear spoken ill, 715
And the best speeches with ill-meaning spill,
Yet the brave courtier, in whose beauteous thought
Regard of honour harbours more than ought,
Doth loath such base condition, to backbite
Any's good name for envy or despite ; 720
He stands on terms of honourable mind,
Ne will be carried with the common wind
Of court's inconstant mutability,
Ne after every tatling fable fly,
But hears and sees the follies of the rest, 725
And thereof gathers for himself the best :
He will not creep, nor crouch with fained face,
But walks upright with comely stedfast pace,
And unto all doth yield due courtesie,
But not with kissed hand below the knee, 730
As that same apish crue is wont to do,
For he disdains himself t' embase thereto :
He hates foul leasings and vile flattery,
Two filthy blots in noble gentery ;
And loathful idleness he doth detest, 735
The canker-worm of every gentle brest ;
The which to banish with fair exercise
Of knightly feats he daily doth devise ;
Now menaging the mouths of stubborn steeds,
Now practising the proof of warlike deeds ; 740

Now his bright arms assaying, now his spear,
Now the nigh-aimed ring away to bear ;
At other times he casts to sue the chace
Of swift wild beasts, or run on foot a race, [ful]
T'enlarge his breath, (large breath in arms most need-
Or else by wrestling to wex strong and heedful; 746
Or his stiff arms to stretch with eughen bow,
And many legs still passing to and fro,
Without a gowned beast him fast beside,
A vain ensample of the Persian pride, 750
Who after he had won th'Assyrian foe,
Did ever after scorn on foot to go.
Thus when this courtly gentleman with toil
Himself had wearied, he doth recoil
Unto his rest, and there with sweet delight 755
Of musick's skill revives his toiled spright,
Or else with loves and ladies gentle sports,
The joy of youth, himself he recomforts ;
Or, lastly, when the body list to pause,
His mind unto the Muses he withdraws ; 760
Sweet Lady Muses ! ladies of delight,
Delights of life, and ornaments of light,
With whom he close confers with wise discourse
Of Nature's works, of heaven's continual course,
Of foreign lands, of people different, 765
Of kingdoms' change, of divers government,
Of dreadful battails of renowned knights,
With which he kindleth his ambitious sprights
To like desire and praise of noble fame,
The only upshot where-to he doth aim ; 770

For all his mind on honour fixed is,
To which he levels all his purposes,
And in his prince's service spends his days,
Not so much for to gain, or for to raise
Himself to high degree, as for his grace, 775
And in his liking to win worthy place,
Through due deserts and comely carriage,
In whatso please employ his personage,
That may be matter meet to gain him praise ;
For he is fit to use in all assays, 780
Whether for arms and warlike amenance,
Or else for wise and civil governancè ;
For he is practiz'd well in policy,
And thereto doth his courting most apply ;
To learn the enterdeale of princes strange, 785
To mark th' intent of counsels, and the change
Of states, and eke of private men some-while,
Supplanted by fine falshood and fair guile ;
Of all the which he gathereth what is fit
T' enrich the storehouse of his powerful wit, 790
Which through wise speeches and grave conference
He daily ekes, and brings to excellence.

Such is the rightful courtier in his kind ;
But unto such the Ape lent not his mind ;
Such were for him no fit companions, 795
Such would discry his leud conditions ;
But the young lusty gallants he did chose
To follow, meet to whom he might disclose
His witless pleasance and ill-pleasing vein.
A thousand ways he them could entertain, 800

With all the thriftless games that may be found,
With mumming and with masking all around,
With dice, with cards, with balliards far unfit,
With shuttlecocks, mis-seeming manly wit.
With courtizans and costly riotize, 805
Whereof still somewhat to his share did rize ;
Ne them to pleasure, would he sometimes scorn
A pandar's coat ; (so basely was he born)
There-to he could fine loving verses frame,
And play the poet oft. But, ah ! for shame, 810
Let not sweet poets praise, whose only pride
Is vertue to advance, and vice deride,
Be with the work of losels' wit defamed,
Ne let such verses poetry be named :
Yet he the name on him would rashly take, 815
Maugre the sacred Muses, and it make
A servant to the vile affection
Of such as he depended most upon,
And with the sugry sweet thereof allure
Chaste ladies' ears to fantasies impure. 820
To such delights the noble wits he led
Which him reliev'd, and their vain humours fed
With fruitless follies and unsound delights ;
But if perhaps into their noble sprights
Desire of honour or brave thought of arms 825
Did ever creep, then with his wicked charms
And strong conceits he would it drive away,
Ne suffer it to house there half a day :
And when-so love of letters did inspire
Their gentle wits, and kindle wise desire, 830

That chiefly doth each noble mind adorn,
Then he would scoff at learning, and eke scorn
The sectaries thereof, as people base,
And simple men, which never came in place
Of world's affairs, but in dark corners mew'd, 835
Mutter'd of matters as their books them shew'd,
Ne other knowledge ever did attain,
But with their gowns their gravity maintain.
From them he would his impudent lewd speach
Against God's holy ministers oft reach, 840
And mock divines and their profession :
What else then did he by progression
But mock high God himself, whom they profess ?
But what car'd he for God or godliness ?
All his care was himself how to advance, 845
And to uphold his courtly countenance
By all the cunning means he could devise ;
Were it by honest ways or otherwise,
He made small choice ; yet sure his honesty
Got him small gains, but shameless flattery, 850
And filthy brocage, and unseemly shifts,
And borrow base, and some good ladies' gifts ;
But the best help which chiefly him sustain'd,
Was his man Reynold's purchase which he gain'd ;
For he was school'd by kind in all the skill 855
Of close conveyance, and each practice ill
Of coosinage and cleanly knavery,
Which oft maintain'd his master's bravery.
Besides, he us'd another slippery sleight,
In taking on himself in common sight 860

False personages, fit for every sted,
 With which he thousands cleanly coosined ;
 Now like a merchant, merchants to deceave,
 With whom his credit he did often leave
 In gage for his gay master's hopeless det ; 865
 Now like a lawyer, when he land would let,
 Or sell fee-simples in his master's name,
 Which he had never, nor ought like the same ;
 Then would he be a broker, and draw in
 Both wares and money, by exchange to win ; 870
 Then would he seem a farmer, that would sell
 Bargains of woods which he did lately fell,
 Or corn, or cattle, or such other ware,
 There-by to coosin men not well aware ;
 Of all the which there came a secret fee 875
 To th' Ape, that he his countenance might be.
 Besides all this, he us'd oft to beguile
 Poor suters that in court did haunt some while ;
 For he would learn their business secretly,
 And then inform his master hastily, 880
 That he by means might cast them to prevent,
 And beg the sute the which the other ment :
 Or otherwise, false Reynold would abuse
 The simple suter, and wish him to chuse
 His master, being one of great regard 885
 In court, to compass any sute not hard,
 In case his pains were recompenc'd with reason ;
 So would he work the silly man by treason
 To buy his master's frivolous good-will,
 That had not power to do him good or ill. 890

So pitiful a thing is suter's state !
Most miserable man ! whom wicked Fate
Hath brought to court to sue for had ywist,
That few have found, and many one hath mist ;
Full little knowest thou that hast not tride, 895
What hell it is in suing long to bide ;
To lose good days that might be better spent,
To waste long nights in pensive discontent ;
To speed to-day, to be put back to-morrow ;
To feed on hope, to pine with fear and sorrow ; 900
To have thy princes grace, yet want her peers ;
To have thy asking, yet wait many years ;
To fret thy soul with crosses and with cares :
To eat thy heart through comfortless despairs ;
To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to ronne, 905
To spend, to give, to want, to be undonne,
Unhappy wight, born to disastrous end,
'That doth his life in so long tendance spend.
Who-ever leaves sweet home, where mean estate
In safe assurance, without strife or hate, 910
Finds all things needful for contentment meek,
And will to court for shadows vain to seek,
Or hope to gain, himself a daw will try ;
'That curse God send unto mine enemy :
For none but such as this bold Ape unblest 915
Can ever thrive in that unlucky quest,
Or such as have a Reynold to his man,
That by his shifts his master furnish can.
But yet this Fox could not so closely hide
His crafty feats, but that they were describe 920

At length, by such as sate in Justice' seat,
Who for the same him foully did entreat,
And having worthily him punished,
Out of the court for ever banished.
And now the Ape wanting his huckster-man, 925
'That wont provide his necessaries, 'gan
To grow into great lack, ne could up-hold
His countenance in those his garments old ;
Ne new ones could he easily provide,
Though all men him uncased 'gan deride, 930
Like as a puppet placed in a play,
Whose part once past, all men bid take away,
So that he driven was to great distress,
And shortly brought to hopelesse wretchedness.
Then closely as he might he cast to leave 935
The court, not asking any pass or leave,
But ran away in his rent rags by night,
Ne ever staid in place, ne spake to wight,
Till that the Fox his copesmate he had found,
To whom complaining his unhappy stound, 940
At last again with him in travel join'd,
And with him far'd, some better chance to find :
So in the world long time they wandered,
And mickle want and hardness suffered,
That them repented much so foolishly 945
To come so far to seek for misery,
And leave the sweetness of contented home,
Though eating hips, and drinking watry fome.
Thus as they them complained to and fro,
Whil'st through the forest rechless they did go, 950

Lo, where they spide how in a gloomy glade
The lion sleeping lay in secret shade,
His crown and scepter lying him beside,
And having doft for heat his dreadful hide ;
Which when they saw, the Ape was sore afraid, 955
And would have fled, with terror all dismay'd ;
But him the Fox with hardy words did stay,
And bad him put all cowardize away,
For now was time (if ever they would hope)
To aim their counsels to the fairest scope, 960
And them for ever highly to advance,
In case the good which their own happy chance
Them freely offred they would wisely take.

Scarce could the Ape yet speak, so did he quake,
Yet as he could he askt how good might grow 965
Where nought but dread and death do seem in show?

Now (said he) whiles the lion sleepeth sound,
May we his crown and mace take from the ground,
And eke his skin, the terror of the wood,
Where-with we may ourselves (if we think good) 970
Make kings of beasts, and lords of forrests all,
Subject unto that power imperial.

Ah ! but (said th'Ape) who is so bold a wretch
That dare his hardy hand to those out-stretch,
When as he knows his meed, if he be spide, 975
To be a thousand deaths, and shame beside ?

Fond Ape (said then the Fox) into whose brest
Never crept thought of honour nor brave gest,
Who will not venture life a king to be,
And rather rule and raign in sovereign sec, 980

Than dwell in dust inglorious and base,
Where none shall name the number of his place ?
One joyous hour in blissful happiness
I chuse before a life of wretchedness :
Be therefore counselled herein by me, 985
And shake off this vile-hearted cowardie.
If he awake, yet is not death the next,
For we may colour it with some pretext
Of this or that, that may excuse the crime ;
Else we may fly ; thou to a tree mayst clime, 990
And I creep under ground ; both from his reach :
Therefore be rul'd to do as I do teach.

The Ape, that earst did nought but chill and quake,
Now 'gan some courage unto him to take,
And was content to attempt that enterprise, 995
Tickled with glory and rash covetise ;
But first 'gan question whether should assay
Those royal ornaments to steal away.

Marry that shall yourself, (quoeth he thereto)
For ye be fine and nimble it to do : 1000
Of all the beasts which in the forrests be,
Is not a fitter for his turn than ye ;
Therefore, mine own dear Brother ! take good hart,
And ever think a kingdom is your part.

Loth was the Ape (though praised) to adventure
Yet faintly 'gan into his work to enter, 1006
Afraid of every leaf that stirr'd him by,
And every stick that underneath did lie :
Upon his tiptoes nicely he up went,
For making noise, and still his ear he lent 1010

To every sound that under heaven blew :
 Now went, now stept, now crept, now backward drew,
 That it good sport had been him to have ey'd :
 Yet at the last (so well he him apply'd)
 Through his fine handling and his cleanly play,
 He all those royal signs had stolen away, 1016
 And with the Fox's help them borne aside
 Into a secret corner unespide ;
 Whither whenas they came they fell at words,
 Whether of them should be the lord of lords ? 1020
 For th'Ape was strifefull and ambitious,
 And the Fox guileful, and most covetous,
 That neither pleased was to have the rein
 Twixt them divided into even twain,
 But either (algates) would be lords alone ; 1025
 For love and lordship bide no paragone.

I am most worthy (said the Ape) sith I
 For it did put my life in jeopardy ;
 There-to I am in person and in stature
 Most like a man, the lord of every creature, 1030
 So that it seemeth I was made to raign,
 And born to be a kingly sovereign.

Nay, (said the Fox) Sir Ape, you are astray ;
 For though to steal the diadem away
 Were the work of your nimble hand, yet I 1035
 Did first devise the plot by policy,
 So that it wholly springeth from my wit,
 For which also I claim my self more fit
 Than you to rule ; for government of state
 Will without wisdom soon be ruinate : 1040

And where ye claim your self for outward shape
 Most like a man, man is not like an Ape
 In his chief parts, that is, in wit and spirit,
 But I therein most like to him do merit,
 For my sly wyles and subtile craftiness, 1045
 The title of the kingdom to possess.

Nath'less (my Brother) since we passed are
 Unto this point, we will appease our jar,
 And I with reason meet will rest content,
 That ye shall have both crown and government, 1050
 Upon condition that ye ruled be
 In all affairs, and counselled by me,
 And that ye let none other ever draw
 Your mind from me, but keep this as a law,
 And hereupon an oath unto me plight. 1055

The Ape was glad to end the strife so light,
 And there-to swore ; for who would not oft swear,
 And oft unswear, a diadem to bear ?
 Then freely up those royal spoils he took,
 Yet at the lion's skin he inly quook, 1060
 But it dissembled, and upon his head
 The crown, and on his back the skin, he did,
 And the false Fox he helped to array :
 Then when he was all dight, he took his way
 Into the forrest, that he might be seen 1065
 Of the wild beasts in his new glory sheen.

There the two first whom he encountred were
 The sheep and th' ass, who stricken both with fear
 At sight of him, 'gan fast away to fly ;
 But unto them the Fox aloud did cry, 1070

And in the king's name bade them both to stay,
 Upon the pain that thereof follow may.
 Hardly nath'less were they restrained so,
 Till that the Fox forth toward them did go,
 And there dissuaded them from needless fear, 1075
 For that the king did favour to them bear,
 And therefore dreadless bade them come to court,
 For no wild beasts should do them any torte
 There or abroad, ne would his majesty
 Use them but well, with gracious clemency, 1080
 As whom he knew to him both fast and true ;
 So he persuaded them with homage due
 Themselves to humble to the Ape prostrate,
 Who gently to them bowing in his gate,
 Received them with chearful entertain. 1085

Thence, forth proceeding with his princely train,
 He shortly met the tyger and the boar,
 Which with the simple camel raged sore
 In bitter words, seeking to take occasion
 Upon his fleshy corps to make invasion : 1090
 But soon as they this mock-king did espy,
 Their troublous strife they stinted by and by,
 Thinking indeed that it the lion was.
 He then, to prove whether his power would pass
 As current, sent the Fox to them straightway, 1095
 Commanding them their cause of strife bewray,
 And if that wrong on either side there were,
 That he should warn the wronger to appear
 The morrow next at court it to defend,
 In the mean time upon the king t'attend. 1100

The subtile Fox so well his message said,
That the proud beasts him readily obey'd;
Whereby the Ape, in wondrous stomach wox,
Strongly encourag'd by the crafty Fox,
That king indeed himself he shortly thought, 1105
And all the beasts him feared as they ought,
And followed unto his palace hie,
Where taking congee, each one by and by
Departed to his home in dreadful awe,
Full of the feared sight which late they saw. 1110

The Ape thus seized of the regal throne,
Eftsoons, by counsel of the Fox alone,
'Gan to provide for all things in assurance,
That so his rule might longer have endurance.
First to his gate he 'pointed a strong guard, 1115
That none might enter but with issue hard;
Then for the safeguard of his personage,
He did appoint a warlike equipage
Of forraign beasts, not in the forrest bred,
But part by land and part by water fed; 1120
For tyranny is with strange ayd supported.
Then unto him all monstrous beasts resorted,
Bred of two kinds, as griffons, minotaures,
Crocodiles, dragons, beavers, and centaures:
With those himself he strengthened mightily, 1125
That fear he need no force of enemy:
Then 'gan he rule and tyrannize at will,
Like as the Fox did guide his graceless skill,
And all wild beasts made vassals of his pleasures,
And with their spoils enlarg'd his private treasures.

No care of justice, nor no rule of reason, 1131
 No temperance, nor no regard of season,
 Did thenceforth ever enter in his mind ;
 But cruelty, the sign of currish kind,
 And 'sdainful pride and wilful arrogance : 1135
 Such follows those whom fortune doth advance :
 But the false Fox most kindly plaid his part,
 For whatsoever mother-wit or art
 Could work, he put in proof ; no practice sly,
 No counterpoint of cunning policy, 1140
 No reach, no breach, that might him profit bring,
 But he the same did to his purpose wring.
 Nought suffred he the Ape to give or graunt,
 But through his hand alone must pass the flaunt.
 All offices, all leases, by him lept, 1145
 And of them all what-so he lik'd he kept,
 Justice he sold, injustice for to buy,
 And for to purchace for his progeny.
 Ill might it prosper that ill gotten was ;
 But so he got it little did he pass. 1150
 He fed his cubs with fat of all the soil,
 And with the sweet of others' sweating toil ;
 He crammed them with crums and benefices,
 And fill'd their mouths with meeds of malefices ;
 He cloathed them with all colours, save white, 1155
 And loaded them with lordships and with might,
 So much as they were able well to bear,
 That with the weight their backs nigh broken were ;
 He chaffred chairs in which churchmen were set,
 And breach of laws to privy farm did let. 1160

No statute so established might be,
Nor ordinance so needful, but that he
Would violate, though not with violence,
Yet under colour of the confidence
The which the Ape repos'd in him alone, 1165
And reckned him the kingdom's corner-stone :
And ever when he ought would bring to pass,
His long experience the platform was ;
And when he ought not pleasing would put by,
The cloke was care of thrift and husbandry, 1170
For to encrease the common treasure's store ;
But his own treasure he encreased more,
And lifted up his lofty towres thereby,
That they began to threat the neighbour sky.
The whiles the prince's palaces fell fast 1175
To ruin ; (for what thing can ever last ?)
And whilst the other peers for poverty
Were forc't their ancient houses to let lie,
And their old castles to the ground to fall,
Which their forefathers, famous over all, 1180
Had founded for the kingdom's ornament,
And for their memories' long monument.
But he no count made of nobility,
Nor the wild beasts whom arms did glorify, 1184
The realm's chief strength and girlond of the crown ;
All these, through fained crimes, he thrust adown,
Or made them dwell in darkness of disgrace,
For none but whom he list might come in place.
Of men of arms he had but small regard,
But kept them low, and streightned very hard ;

For men of learning little he esteemed ; 1191
 His wisdom lie above their learning deemed.
 As for the rascal commons, least he cared,
 For not so common was his bounty shared ;
 Let God, (said he) if please, care for the many,
 I for myself must care before else any. 1196
 So did he good to none, to many ill,
 So did he all the kingdom rob and pill,
 Yet none durst speak, nor none durst of him plain,
 So great he was in grace, and rich through gain:
 Ne would he any let to have access 1201
 Unto the prince but by his own address ;
 For all that else did come were sure to fail ;
 Yet would he further none but for avail :
 For on a time the sheep, to whom of yore 1205
 The Fox had promised of friendship store,
 What time the Ape the kingdom first did gain,
 Came to the court her case there to complain,
 How that the wolf, her mortal enemy,
 Had sithence slain her lamb most cruelly, 1210
 And therefore crav'd to come unto the king,
 To let him know the order of the thing.
 Soft, Goody Sheep, (then said the Fox) not so ;
 Unto the king so rash ye may not go ;
 He is with greater matter busied 1215
 Than a lamb, or the lamb's own mother's hed ;
 Ne certes may I take it well in part
 That ye my cousin wolf so foully thwart,
 And seek with slander his good name to blot ;
 For there was cause else do it he would not : 1220

Therefore surcease, good Dame, and hence depart :
So went the sheep away with heavy heart ;
So many moe, so every one was used,
That to give largely to the box refused.

Now when high Jove, in whose almighty hand
The care of kings and power of empires stand, 1226
Sitting one day within his turret hie,
From whence he views with his black-lidded eye,
What-so the heaven in his wide vault contains,
And all that in the deepest earth remains, 1230
And troubled kingdom of wild beasts beheld,
Whom not their kindly sovereign did weld,
But an usurping Ape with guile suborn'd,
Had all subverst, he sdeignfully it scorn'd
In his great heart, and hardly did refrain, 1235
But that with thunderbolts he had him slain,
And driven down to hell, his duest meed ;
But him avising, he that dreadful deed
Forbore, and rather chose with scornful shame
Him to avenge, and blot his brutish name 1240
Unto the world, that never after any
Should of his race be void of infamy ;
And his false counsellor, the cause of all,
To damn to death, or dole perpetual,
From whence he never should be quit nor stall'd.
Forth-with he Mercury unto him call'd, 1246
And bade him fly with never-resting speed
Unto the forrest, where wild beasts do breed,
And there enquiring privily, to learn
What did of late chance to the lion stearn, 1250

That he rul'd not the empire as he ought ?
 And whence were all those plaints unto him brought,
 Of wrongs and spoils by salvage beasts committed ?
 Which done, he bade the lion be remitted
 Into his seat, and those same treachours vile 1255
 Be punished for their presumptuous guile.
 The son of Maia, soon as he receiv'd
 That word, straight with his azure wings he cleav'd
 The liquid clouds and lucid firmament,
 Ne staid till that he came with steep descent 1260
 Unto the place where his prescript did show ;
 There stouping, like an arrow from a bow,
 He soft arrived on the grassie plain,
 And fairly paced forth with easy pain,
 Till that unto the palace nigh he came ; 1265
 Then 'gan he to himself new shape to frame,
 And that fair face, and that ambrosial hue,
 Which wons to deck the gods' immortal crew,
 And beautifie the shiny firmament,
 He doft, unfit for that rude rabblement. 1270
 So standing by the gates in strange disguise,
 He 'gan inquire of some, in secret wize,
 Both of the king and of his government,
 And of the Fox, and his false blandishment ;
 And evermore he heard each one complain 1275
 Of foul abuses both in realm and raigin ;
 Which yet to prove more true, he meant to see,
 And an eye-witness of each thing to be :
 Tho' on his head his dreadful hat he dight,
 Which maketh him invisible to sight, 1280

And mocketh the eyes of all the lookers on,
Making them think it but a vision.

Thro' power of that he runs thro' enemies swords ;
Through power of that he passeth through the herds
Of ravenous wild beasts, and doth beguile · 1285

Their greedy mouths of the expected spoil ;
Through power of that his cunning thieveries
He wents to work, that none the same espies ;
And through the power of that he putteth on
What shape he list in apparition. 1290

That on his head he wore, and in his hand
He took caduceus, his snaky wand,
With which the damned ghosts he governeth,
And furies rules, and Tartare tempereth ;
With that he causeth sleep to seize the eyes, 1295
And fear the hearts of all his enemies ;
And when him list, an universal night
Throughout the world he makes on every wight,
As when his sire with Alcumena lay.

Thus dight, into the court he took his way, 1300
Both through the gard, which never him descride,
And through the watchmen, who him never spide :
Thence forth he past into each secret part,
Whereas he saw (that sorely griev'd his hart)

Each place abounding with foul injuries, 1305
And fill'd with treasure rack'd with robberies ;
Each place defil'd with blood of guiltless beasts,
Which had been slain to serve the Ape's beheasts :
Gluttony, malice, pride, and covetize,
And lawlessness raiging with riotize ; 1310

Besides the infinite extortions
Done through the Fox's great oppressions,
'That the complaints thereof could not be told :
Which when he did with loathful eyes behold,
He would no more endure, but came his way, 1315
And cast to seek the lion where he may,
'That he might work th'avengement for his shame,
On those two caitives which had bred him blame ;
And seeking all the forrest busily,
At last he found where sleeping he did lie. 1320
The wicked weed, which there the Fox did lay,
From underneath his head he took away,
And then him waking, forced up to rise,
The lion, looking up, 'gan him avize,
As one late in a trance, what had of long 1325
Become of him, for fantasie is strong.
Arise, (said Mercury) thou sluggish beast,
That here liest senseless, like the corpse deceast,
The whilst thy kingdom from thy head is rent,
And thy throne royal with dishonour blent ; 1330
Arise, and do thy self redeem from shame,
And be aveng'd on those that breed thy blame.
There-at enraged, soon he 'gan up-start,
Grinding his teeth, and grating his great hart,
And rousing up himself, for his rough hide 1335
He 'gan to reach, but no where it espide :
There-with he 'gan full terrible to roar,
And chauf't at that indignity right sore ; 1338
But when his crown and scepter both he wanted,
Lord how he fum'd, and swell'd, and rag'd, and panted,

And threatned death, and thousand deadly dolours,
To them that had purloin'd his princely honours !
With that in haste, disrobed as he was,
He towards his own palace forth did pass,
And all the way he roared as he went, 1345
That all the forrest with astonishment
Thereof did tremble, and the beasts therein
Fled fast away from that so dreadful din.
At last he came unto his mansion,
Where all the gates he found fast lockt anon, 1350
And many warders round about them stood :
With that he roar'd aloud, as he were wood,
That all the palace quaked at the stound,
As if it quite were riven from the ground,
And all within were dead and heartless left ; 1355
And th' Ape himself, as one whose wits were reft,
Fled here and there, and every corner sought,
To hide himself from his own feared thought :
But the false Fox, when he the lion heard,
Fled closely forth, straightway of death afear'd,
And to the lion came full lowly creeping, 1361
With fained face, and watry eyn half weeping,
T' excuse his former treason and abusion,
And turning all unto the Ape's confusion :
Nath'less the royal beast forbore believing, 1365
But bade him stay at ease till further prieving.
Then when he saw no entrance to him graunted,
Roaring yet louder, that all hearts it daunted,
Upon those gates with force he fiercely flew,
And rending them in pieces, felly slew 1370

Those warders strange, and all that else he met,
 But th' Ape still flying, he no where might get ;
 From room to room, from beam to beam he fled,
 All breathless, and for fear now almost ded :
 Yet him at last the lion spide, and caught, 1375
 And forth with shame unto his judgment brought.
 Then all the beasts he caus'd assembled be,
 To hear their doom, and sad ensample see.
 The Fox, first author of that treachery,
 He did uncase, and then away let fly ; 1380
 But th' Ape's long tail (which then he had) he quite
 Cut off, and both ears pared of their height ;
 Since which all apes but half their ears have left,
 And of their tails are utterly bereft."

So Mother Hubbard her discourse did end, 1385
 Which pardon me if I amiss have pen'd ;
 For weak was my remembrance it to hold,
 And bad her tongue that it so bluntly told. 1388

PROTHALAMION:

OR,

A SPOUSAL VERSE,

IN honour of the double marriage of the two honourable and virtuous ladies, the Lady Elizabeth, and the Lady Catherine Somerset, daughters to the right honourable the Earl of Worcester, and espoused to the two worthy gentlemen, Henry Gilford and William Peter, Esquires.

CALM was the day, and through the trembling air
Sweet-breathing Zephyrus did softly play
A gentle spirit, that lightly did allay
Hot Titan's beams, which then did glister fair,
When I, whom sullen care, 5
Through discontent of my long fruitless stay
In princes' courts, and expectations vain
Of idle hopes, which still do fly away,
Like empty shadows, did afflict my brain,
Walk'd forth to ease my pain 10
Along the shore of silver streaming Thames,
Whose rushy bank, the which his river hems,
Was painted all with variable flowers,
And all the meeds adorn'd with dainty gems,
Fit to deck maidens' bowres, 15
And crown their paramours
Against the bridal-day, which is not long ;
Sweet Thames ! run softly till I end my song.

There in a meadow by the river's side,
A flock of nymphs I chanced to espy, 20
All lovely daughters of the flood thereby,
With goodly greenish locks all loose untide,
As each had been a bride ;
And each one had a little wicker basket,
Made of fine twigs, entrained curiously, 25
In which they gather'd flowers to fill their flasket,
And with fine fingers cropt full feateously
The tender stalks on hie.
Of every sort which in that meadow grew
They gather'd some; the violet, pallid blue, 30
The little dazie, that at evening closes,
The virgin lillie, and the primrose true,
With store of vermeil roses,
To deck their bridegrooms' posies
Against the bridal-day, which was not long ; 35
Sweet Thames ! run softly till I end my song.

With that I saw two swans of goodly hue
Come softly swimming down along the lee ;
Two fairer birds I yet did never see ;
The snow which does the top of Pindus strew, 40
Did never whiter shew,
Nor Jove himself, when he a swan would be
For love of Leda, whiter did appear ;
For Leda was (they say) as white as he,
Yet not so white as these, nor nothing near ; 45
So purely white they were,

That even the gentle stream, the which them bare,
Seem'd foul to them, and bad his billows spare
To wet their silken feathers, least they might
Soyl their fair plumes with water not so fair, 50
And mar their beauties bright,
That shone as heaven's light,
Against their bridal-day, which was not long ;
Sweet Thames ! run softly till I end my song.

Eftsoons the nymphs, which now had flowers their fill,
Ran all in haste to see that silver brood, 56
As they came floting on the crystal flood ;
Whom when they saw, they stood amazed still,
Their wondring eyes to fill ;
Them seem'd they never saw a sight so fair, 60
Of fowls so lovely, that they sure did deem
Them heavenly born, or to be that same pair
Which through the sky draw Venus' silver teem ;
For sure they did not seem
To be begot of any earthly seed, 65
But rather angels, or of angels' breed ;
Yet were they bred of summer's-heat, they say,
In sweetest season, when each flower and weed
The earth did fresh array ;
So fresh they seem'd as day, 70
Even as their bridal-day, which was not long ;
Sweet Thames ! run softly till I end my song.

Then forth they all out of their baskets drew
Great store of flowers, the honour of the field,

That to the sense did fragrant odours yield, 75
 All which upon those goodly birds they threw,
 And all the waves did strew,
 That like old Peneus' waters they did seem,
 When down along by pleasant Tempe's shore,
 Scatter'd with flowers, through Thessaly they stream,
 That they appear, through lillies' plentious store, 81
 Like a bride's chamber-floore. [bound
 Two of those nymphs, mean-while, two garlands
 Of freshest flowers which in that meed they found,
 The which presenting all in trim array, 85
 Their snowy foreheads therewithall they crown'd,
 Whilst one did sing this lay,
 Prepar'd against that day,
 Against that bridal-day, which was not long ;
 Sweet Thames ! run softly till I end my song. 90

" Ye gentle Birds! the world's fair ornament,
 " And heaven's glory, whom this happy hour
 " Doth lead unto your lovers' blissful bower,
 " Joy may you have, and gentle hearts content
 " Of your love's complement ; 95
 " And let fair Venus, that is Queen of Love,
 " With her heart-quelling son upon you smile,
 " Whose smile, they say, hath vertue to remove
 " All love's dislike, and friendship's faulty guile
 " For ever to assoil. 100
 " Let endless peace your stedfast hearts accord,
 " And blessed plenty wait upon your bord ;
 " And let your bed with pleasures chaste abound,
 " That fruitful issue may to you afford,

“ Which may your foes confound, 105
“ And make your joys redound
“ Upon your bridal-day, which is not long ;
“ Sweet Thames ! run softly till I end my song.”

So ended she, and all the rest around
To her redoubled that her undersong, 110
Which said their bridal-day should not be long,
And gentle Eccho from the neighbour ground
Their accents did resound.

So forth those joyous birds did pass along
Adown the lee, that to them murmur'd low, 115
As he would speak, but that he lackt a tong,
Yet did by signs his glad affection show,
Making his stream run slow,
And all the fowl which in his flood did dwell
'Gan flock about these twain, that did excell 120
The rest so far as Cynthia doth shend
The lesser stars. So they enranged well
Did on those two attend,
And their best service lend
Against their wedding-day, which was not long ;
Sweet Thames ! run softly till I end my song. 126

At length they all to merry London came,
To merry London, my most kindly nurse,
That to me gave this life's first native sourse,
Though from another place I take my name, 130
An house of antient fame :

There when they came, whereas those bricky towres
The which on Thames' brode aged back do ride,
Where now the studious lawyers have their bowres,

There whilome wont the Templer Knights to bide,
Till they decay'd through pride ; 136
Next whereunto there stands a stately place,
Where oft I gained gifts and goodly grace
Of that great lord which therein wont to dwell.
Whose want too well now feels my friendless case ;
But ah ! here fits not well 141
Old woes, but joys, to tell
Against the bridal-day, which is not long ;
Sweet Thames ! run softly till I end my song.

Yet therein now doth lodge a noble peer, 145
Great England's glory, and the world's wide wonder,
Whose dreadful name late thro' all Spain did thunder,
And Hercules' two Pillars standing near
Did make to quake and fear :
Fair branch of honour, flower of chevalry ! 150
That fillest England with thy triumph's fame,
Joy have thou of thy noble victory,
And endless happiness of thine own name
That promiseth the same ;
That through thy prowess and victorious arms 155
Thy country may be freed from foreign harms,
And great Eliza's glorious name may ring
Through all the world, fill'd with thy wide alarms,
Which some brave Muse may sing
To ages following, 160
Upon the bridal-day, which is not long ;
Sweet Thames ! run softly till I end my song.

From those high towers this noble lord issuing,
Like radiant Hesper, when his golden hair
In th' ocean billows he hath bathed fair, 165
Descended to the river's open viewing,
With a great train ensuing.
Above the rest were goodly to be seen
Two gentle knights of lovely face and feature,
Beseeming well the bowre of any queen, 170
With gifts of wit, and ornaments of nature,
Fit for so goodly stature,
That like the Twins of Jove they seem'd in sight,
Which deck the bauldrick of the heavens bright ;
They two forth passing to the river's-side, 175
Receiv'd those two fair brides, their loves' delight,
Which at th' appointed tide
Each one did make his bride
Against their bridal-day, which is not long ;
Sweet Thames ! run softly till I end my song. 180

EPITHALAMION.

YE learned Sisters! which have oftentimes
Been to me aiding, others to adorn,
Whom ye thought worthy of your graceful rimes,
That ev'n the greatest did not greatly scorn
To hear their names sung in your simple layes, 5
But joyed in their praise ;
And when ye list your own mishap to mourn,
Which death, or love, or fortune's wreck, did raise,
Your string could soon to sadder tenour turn,
And teach the woods and waters to lament 10
Your doleful dreriment ;
Now lay those sorrowful complaints aside,
And having all your heads with girlands crown'd,
Help me mine own love's praises to resound,
Ne let the same of any be envide : 15
So Orpheus did for his own bride ;
So I unto my self alone will sing,
The woods shall to me answer, and my eccho ring.

Early before the world's light-giving lamp
His golden beam upon the hills doth spread, 20
Having disperst the night's uncheerful damp,
Do ye awake, and with fresh lustihed,
Go to the bowre of my beloved love,
My truest turtle-dove,
Bid her awake, for Hymen is awake, 25
And long since ready forth his mask to move,
With his bright tead that flames with many a flake,

And many a batchelor to wait on him,
In their fresh garments trim ;
Bid her awake, therefore, and soon her dight, 30
For loe, the wished day is come at last,
That shall for all the pains and sorrows past
Pay to her usury of long delight ;
And whilst she doth her dight,
Do ye to her of joy and solace sing, 35
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

Bring with you all the nymphs that you can hear,
Both of the rivers and the forests green,
And of the sea that neighbours to her near,
All with gay girlands goodly well beseen ; 40
And let them also with them bring in hand
Another gay girland,
For my fair love, of lillies and of roses,
Bound true-love wise with a blue silk riband ;
And let them make great store of bridal posies, 45
And let them eke bring store of other flowers
To deck the bridal bowers ;
And let the ground whereas her foot shall tread,
For fear the stones her tender foot should wrong,
Be strew'd with fragrant flowers all along, 50
And diapred like the discoloured meed :
Which done, do at her chamber-door await,
For she will waken strait ;
The whiles do ye this song unto her sing, 54
The woods shall to you answer, and your eccho ring.

“ Ye Nymphs of Mulla, which with careful heed
The silver scaly trouts do tend full well,
And greedy pikes which use therein to feed,
(Those trouts and pikes all others do excel)
And ye likewise, which keep the rushie lake, 60
Where none do fishes take,
Bind up the locks the which hang scatterd light,
And in his waters, which your mirror make,
Behold your faces as the crystal bright,
That when you come whereas my love doth lie, 65
No blemish she may spie.
And eke, ye lightfoot Maids! which keep the door,
That on the hoary mountain use to towre,
And the wild wolves which seek them to devour,
Which your steel darts do chace from coming near,
Be also present here 71
To help to deck her, and to help to sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

“ Wake now, my Love! awake, for it is time;
The rosie Morn long since left Tithon's bed, 75
All ready to her silver coach to clime,
And Phœbus 'gins to shew his glorious head.
Hark! how the chearful birds do chaunt their layes,
And carrol of Love's praise.
The merry lark her mattins sings aloft, 80
The thrush replies, the mavis descant plays,
The ouzel shrills, the ruddock warbles soft;
So goodly all agree, with sweet consent,
To this day's merriment.

Ah! my dear Love! why do ye sleep thus long, 85
 When meeter were that ye should now awake,
 T' await the coming of your joyous make,
 And hearken to the bird's love-learned song,
 The dewie leaves among?
 For they of joy and pleasance to you sing, 90
 That all the woods them answer, and their eccho ring.

“ My love is now awake out of her dreams,
 And her fair eyes, like stars that dimmed were
 With darksome cloud, now shew their goodly beams,
 More bright than Hesperus his head doth rere. 95
 Come now, ye Damsels! daughters of Delight,
 Help quickly her to dight;
 But first come, ye fair Houres! which were begot
 In Jove's sweet paradise of day and night,
 Which do the seasons of the year allot, 100
 And all that ever in this world is fair
 Do make and still repair:
 And ye three Handmaids of the Cyprian queen,
 The which do still adorn her beauty's pride,
 Help to adorn my beautifullest bride, 105
 And as ye her array, still throw between
 Some graces to be seen;
 And as ye use to Venus, to her sing, [ring.
 The whiles the woods shall answer, and your eccho

“ Now is my love all ready forth to come, 110
 Let all the virgins therefore well await;
 And ye, fresh Boys, that tend upon her groom,
 Prepare yourselves, for he is coming strait:

Set all your things in seemly good array,
 Fit for so joyful day, 115
 The joyfult day that ever sun did see.
 Fair Sun ! shew forth thy favourable ray,
 And let thy life-ful heat not fervent be,
 For fear of burning her sun-shiny face,
 Her beauty to disgrace. 120
 O fairest Phœbus ! father of the Muse,
 If ever I did honour thee aright,
 Or sing the thing that mote thy mind delight,
 Do not thy servant's simple boon refuse,
 But let this day, let this one day be mine, 125
 Let all the rest be thine :
 Then I thy sovereign praises loud will sing,
 That all the woods shall answer, and their eccho ring.

“ Hark ! how the minstrils 'gin to shrill aloud
 Their merry musick that resounds from far, 130
 The pipe, the taber, and the trembling croud,
 That well agree withouten breach or jar :
 But most of all the damzels do delite
 When they their timbrels smite,
 And thereunto do daunce and carrol sweet, 135
 That all the senses they do ravish quite ;
 The whiles the boys run up and down the street,
 Crying aloud, with strong confused noise,
 As if it were one voice,
 Hymen, Iö Hymen ! Hymen they do shout, 140
 That even to the heavens their shouting shrill
 Doth reach, and all the firmament doth fill ;

To which the people standing all about,
As in approvance, do thereto applaud,
And loud advance her laud, 145
And ever more they Hymen, Hymen sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their eccho ring.

“ Lo, where she comes along with portly pace,
Like Phœbe, from her chamber of the East,
Arising forth to run her mighty race, 150
Clad all in white, that seems a virgin best :
So well it her beseems, that ye would ween
Some angel she had been :
Her long loose yellow locks, like golden wire,
Sprinkled with pearl, and perling flowres atween,
Do like a golden mantel her attire, 156
And being crowned with a girland green,
Seem like some maiden queen.
Her modest eyes, abashed to behold
So many gazers as on her do stare, 160
Upon the lowly ground affixed are,
Ne dare lift up her countenance too bold,
But blush to hear her praises sung so loud,
So far from being proud.
Nathless do ye still loud her praises sing, 165
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

“ Tell me, ye merchants' daughters! did ye see
So fair a creature in your town before,
So sweet, so lovely, and so mild as she, 169
Adorn'd with beauty's grace and vertue's store ?

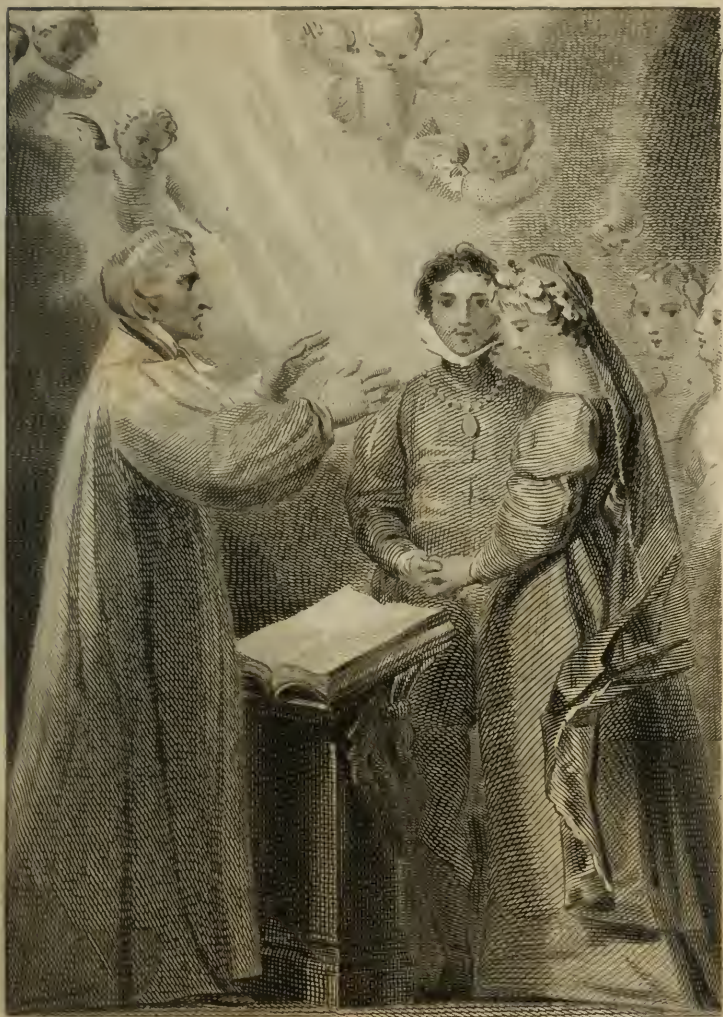
Her goodly eyes like sapphires shining bright,
Her forehead ivory white,
Her cheeks like apples which the sun hath rudded,
Her lips like cherries, charming men to bite,
Her brest like to a bowl of cream uncrudded, 175
Her paps like lillies budded,
Her snowy neck like to a marble towre,
And all her body like a palace fair,
Ascending up with many a stately stair
To Honour's seat, and Chastity's sweet bowre.
Why stand ye still, ye virgins! in amaze, 181
Upon her so to gaze ;
Whiles ye forget your former lay to sing,
To which the woods did answer, and your eccho ring.

“ But if ye saw that which no eyes can see, 185
The inward beauty of her lively spright,
Garnish'd with heavenly gifts of high degree,
Much more then would ye wonder at that sight,
And stand astonish'd like to those which red
Medusa's mazeful head. 190
'There dwells sweet Love and constant Chastity,
Unspotted Faith, and comely Womanhood,
Regard of Honour, and mild Modesty ;
'There Vertue reigns as queen in royal throne,
And giveth laws alone, 195
The which the base affections do obey,
And yield their services unto her will ;
Ne thought of things uncomely ever may
'Thereto approach, to tempt her mind to ill.

Had ye once seen these her celestial treasures, 200
 And unrevealed pleasures,
 Then would ye wonder, and her praises sing,
 That all the woods should answer, and your eccho
 ring.

“ Open the temple-gates unto my love,
 Open them wide that she may enter in, 205
 And all the posts adorn as doth behove,
 And all the pillars deck with girlands trim,
 For to receive this saint with honour due,
 That cometh in to you.
 With trembling steps and humble reverence 210
 She cometh in before th’ Almighty’s view ;
 Of her, ye Virgins ! learn obedience,
 Whenso ye come into those holy places,
 To humble your proud faces,
 Bring her up to th’ high altar that she may 215
 The sacred ceremonies there partake,
 The which do endless matrimony make ;
 And let the roaring organs loudly play
 The praises of the Lord in lively notes,
 The whiles with hollow throats 220
 The choristers the joyous anthem sing,
 That all the woods may answer, and their eccho ring.

“ Behold, whiles she before the altar stands,
 Hearing the holy priest that to her speaks,
 And blesses her with his two happy hands, 225
 How the red roses flush up in her cheeks !



H. A. C. cut

*"Behold, whilst she before the Altar stands,
&c.*

Epithalamion V. 223.

And the pure snow with goodly vermil stain,
Like crimsin dy'd in grain,
That even the angels, which continually
About the sacred altar do remain, 230
Forget their service, and about her fly,
Oft peeping in her face, that seems more fair
The more they on it stare ;
But her sad eyes, still fastned on the ground,
Are governed with goodly modesty, 235
That suffers not one look to glaunce awry,
Which may let in a little thought unsound.
Why blush ye, Love ! to give to me to your hand,
The pledge of all our band ?
Sing, ye sweet angels ! Alleluya sing, 240
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

“ Now all is done ; bring home the bride again,
Bring home the triumph of our victory ;
Bring home with you the glory of her gain,
With joyance bring her, and with jollity. 245
Never had man more joyful day than this,
Whom Heaven would heap with bliss.
Make feast, therefore, now all this live-long day,
This day for ever to me holy is :
Pour out the wine without restraint or stay, 250
Pour not by cups, but by the belly-full ;
Pour out to all that wull,
And sprinkle all the posts and walls with wine,
That they may sweat and drunken be withal :
Crown ye god Bacchus with a coronal, 255

And Hymen also crown with wreaths of vine,
And let the graces daunce unto the rest,
For they can do it best;
The whiles the maidens do their carol sing,
To which the woods shall answer, and their eccho ring.

“ Ring ye the bells, ye young men of the town, 261
And leave your wonted labours for this day;
This day is holy; do you write it down,
That ye for ever it remember may:
This day the sun is in its chieftest hight, 265
With Barnaby the bright;
From whence declining daily by degrees,
He somewhat loseth of his heat and light,
When once the Crab behind his back he sees:
But for this time it ill ordained was, 270
To chuse the longest day in all the year,
And shortest night, when longest fitter were;
Yet never day so long but late would pass.
Ring ye the bells to make it wear away,
And bonfires make all day, 275
And daunce about them, and about them sing,
That all the woods may answer, and your eccho ring.

“ Ah! when will this long weary day have end,
And lend me leave to come unto my love?
How slowly do the hours their numbers spend? 280
How slowly doth sad Time his feathers move?
Haste thee, O fairest Planet! to thy home,
Within the western foame;

Thy tyred steeds long since have need of rest.
Long tho it be, at last I see it gloom, 285
And the bright evening-star, with golden crest,
Appear out of the east.

Fair child of beauty, glorious lamp of love,
That all the host of heaven in ranks doost lead,
And guidest lovers through the night's sad dread,
How cheerfully thou lookest from above, 291
And seem'st to laugh atween thy twinkling light,
As joying in the sight
Of these glad many, which for joy do sing,
That all the woods them answer, and their eccho ring.

Now cease, ye Damsels! your delights forepast,
Enough it is that all the day was yours ; 297
Now day is done, and night is nighing fast,
Now bring the bride into the bridal howres ;
Now night is come, now soon her disarray, 300
And in her bed her lay ;
Lay her in lillies and in violets,
And silken curtains over her display,
And odour'd sheets, and arras coverlets.
Behold how goodly my fair love does lie, 305
In proud humility ;
Like unto Maia, whenas Jove her took
In Tempe, lying on the flowrie grass,
'Twixt sleep and wake, after she weary was
With bathing in the Acidalian brook : 310
Now it is night, ye damsels may be gone,
And leave my love alone,

And leave likewise your former lay to sing ;
The woods no more shall answer, nor your eccho
ring.

Now welcome night, thou night so long expected,
That long days labour doth at last defray, 316
And all my cares, which cruel love collected,
Hast summ'd in one, and cancelled for aye :
Spread thy broad wing over my love and me,
That no man may us see, 320
And in thy sable mantle us enwrap,
From fear of peril, and foul horror free ;
Let no false treason seek us to entrap,
Nor any dread disquiet once annoy
The safety of our joy ; 325
But let the night be calm and quiet some,
Without tempestuous storms or sad affray,
Like as when Jove with fair Alcmena lay,
When he begot the great Tirynthian groom ;
Or like as when he with thy self did lie, 330
And begot Majesty ;
And let the maids and young men cease to sing ;
Ne let the woods them answer, nor their eccho ring.

Let no lamenting cries nor doleful tears
Be heard all night within, nor yet without ; 335
Ne let false whispers, breeding hidden fears,
Break gentle sleep with misconceived doubt :
Let no deluding dreams, nor dreadful sights,
Make sudden sad affrights ;

Ne let house-fires, nor lightnings, helpless harms,
Ne let the ponk, nor other evil sprights, 341
Ne let mischievous witches with their charms,
Ne let hob-goblins, names whose sense we see not,
Fray us with things that be not :

Let not the skriech-owl nor the stork be heard,
Nor the night raven, that still deadly yells, 345
Nor damned ghosts, call'd up with mighty spells,
Nor griesly vultures, make us once affeard :
Ne let th' unpleasant quire of frogs still croking
Make us to wish their choking ; 350
Let none of these their drery accents sing,
Ne let the woods them answer, nor their eccho ring ;

But let still Silence true night-watches keep,
That sacred Peace may in assurance reign,
And timely Sleep, when it is time to sleep, 355
May pour his limbs forth on your pleasant plain ;
The whiles an hundred little winged Loves,
Like divers-fethered doves,
Shall fly and flutter round about your bed,
And in the secret dark, that none reproves, 360
Their pretty stealths shal! work, and snares shall
spread

To filch away sweet snatches of delight,
Conceal'd through covert night,
Ye Sons of Venus! play your sports at will,
For greedy Pleasure, careless of your toyes, 365
Thinks more upon her paradise of joyes
Than what ye do, all be it good or ill.

All night, therefore, attend your merry play,
For it will soon be day :
Now none doth hinder you that say or sing, 370
Ne will the woods now answer, nor your eccho ring.

Who is the same which at my window peeps ?
Or whose is that fair face which shines so bright ?
Is it not Cynthia, she that never sleeps,
But walks about high heaven all the night ? 375
O ! fairest Goddess ! do thou not envy
My love with me to spy ;
For thou likewise didst love, though now unthought,
And for a fleece of wool, which privily
The Latmian shepherd once unto thee brought, 380
His pleasures with thee wrought :
Therefore to us be favourable now,
And sith of womens labours thou hast charge,
And generation goodly doost enlarge,
Encline thy will t' effect our wishful vow, 385
And the chaste womb inform with timely seed,
That may our comfort breed ;
Till which we cease our hopeful hap to sing,
Ne let the woods us answer, nor our eccho ring.

And thou, great Juno ! which with awful might
The laws of wedlock still doost patronize, 391
And the religion of the faith first plight,
With sacred rites hast taught to solemnize,
And eke for comfort often called art
Of women in their smart, 395

Eternally bind thou this lovely band,
And all thy blessing unto us impart.
And thou, glad Genius ! in whose gentle hand
The bridale bowre and genial bed remain,
Without blemish or stain, 400
And the sweet pleasures of their love's delight
With secret aid doost succour and supply,
Till they bring forth the fruitful progeny,
Send us the timely fruit of this same night.
And thou, fair Hebe ! and thou, Hymen ! free 405
Grant that it so may be.
'Till which we cease your further praise to sing,
Ne any woods shall answer, nor your eccho ring.

And ye, high Heavens ! the temple of the gods,
In which a thousand torches flaming bright 410
Do burn, that to us wretched earthly clods
In dreadful darkness lend desired light ;
And all ye Powers which in the same remain,
More than we men can feign,
Pour out your blessing on us plenteously, 415
And happy influence upon us rain,
That we may rise a large posterity,
Which from the earth, which they may long possess
With lasting happiness,
Up to your haughty palaces may mount, 420
And for the guerdon of their glorious merit
May heavenly tabernacles there inherit,
Of blessed saints for to encrease the count :
So let us rest, sweet Love ! in hope of this,

And cease till then our timely joys to sing, 425
The woods no more us answer, nor our eccho ring.

SONG made in lieu of many ornaments
With which my love should duly have been deckt,
Which cutting off through hasty accidents,
Ye would not stay your due time to expect, 430
But promis'd both to recompence,
Be unto her a goodly ornament,
And for short time an endless monument. 433

P O E M S.

IN youth, before I wexed old,
The blinded boy, Venus' baby,
For want of cunning made me bold,
It bitter hive to grope for honey ;
But when he saw me stung and cry,
He took wing and away did fly.

As Diane hunted on a day,
She chanc'd to come where Cupid lay,
His quiver by his head ;
One of his shafts she stole away,
And one of hers did close convey
Into the other's stead :
With that Love wounded my love's heart,
But Diane beasts with Cupid's dart.

I SAW in secret to my dame
How little Cupid humbly came,
And said to her, All hail, my Mother ;
But when he saw me laugh, for shame
His face with bashful blood did flame,
Not knowing Venus from the other.
Then never blush, Cupid, quoth I,
For many have err'd in this beauty.

UPON a day, as Love lay sweetly slumbring
All in his mother's lap,
A gentle bee, with his loud trumpet murm'ring,
About him flew by hap ;
Whereof when he was wakened with the noise, 5
And saw the beast so small,
What's this (quoth he) that gives so weak a voice,
That wakens men withall ?
In angry wise he flies about,
And threatens all with courage stout : 10

To whom his mother closely, smiling, said,
'Twixt earnest and 'twixt game,
See, thou thy self likewise art little made,
If thou regard the same ;
And yet thou sufferest neither gods in sky, 15
Nor men in earth to rest,
But when thou art disposed cruelly,
Their sleep thou dost molest :
Then either change thy cruelty,
Or give like leave unto the fly. 20

Nath'less the cruel boy, not so content,
Would needs the fly pursue,
And in his hand with heedless hardiment
Him caught for to subdue ;
But when on it he hasty hand did lay, 25
'The bee him stung therefore ;
Now out, alas ! he cride, and wele-away !
I wounded am full sore ;

The fly, that I so much did scorn,
Hath hurt me with his little horn. 30

Unto his mother straight he weeping came,
And of his grief complain'd,
Who could not chuse but laugh at his fond game,
Though sad to see him pain'd.
Think now (quoth she) my son, how great the smart
Of those whom thou doost wound ; 36
Full many thou hast pricked to the heart,
That pity never found ;
Therefore henceforth some pity take,
When thou dost spoil of lovers make. 40

She took him straight full piteously lamenting,
And wrapt him in her smock ;
She wrapt him softly, all the while repenting
That he the fly did mock :
She drest his wound, and it embalmed well 45
With salve of sovereign might,
And then she bath'd him in a dainty well,
The well of dear Delight,
Who would not oft be stung as this,
To be so bath'd in Venus' bliss ? 50

The wanton boy was shortly well recur'd
Of that his malady ;
But he soon after, fresh again enur'd
His former cruelty :

And since that time he wounded hath my self. 55.
With his sharp dart of love,
And now forgets the cruel careless elf
His mother's heast to prove :
So now I languish till he please
My pining anguish to appease. 60

AMORETTI:

OR,

SONNETS.

G. W. sen. to the Author.

DARK is the day when Phœbus' face is shrouded,
And weaker sights may wander soon astray,
But when they see his glorious rays unclouded,
With steddy steps they keep the perfect way ;
So while this Muse in foreign land doth stay,
Invention weeps, and pens are cast aside,
The time, like night, depriv'd of cheerful day,
And few do write, but, ah ! too soon may slide.
Then hie thee home, that art our perfect guide,
And with thy wit illustrate England's fame,
Daunting thereby our neighbours' antient pride,
That do for poesie challenge chiefest name:
So we that live, and ages that succeed,
With great applause thy learned Works shall read.

G. W. jun. to the Author.

AH ! Colin, whether on the lowly plain,
Piping to shepherds thy sweet roundelays,
Or whether singing in some lofty vein
Heroic deeds of past or present days,
Or whether in thy lovely mistress' praise
Thou list to exercise thy learned quill,
Thy Muse hath got such grace and power to please,
With rare invention, beautified by skill,
As who therein can ever joy their fill !
O therefore let that happy Muse proceed
To clime the height of Vertue's sacred hill !
Where endless honour shall be made thy meed
Because no malice of succeeding days
Can raise those records of thy lasting praise.

SONNETS.

I.

HAPPY, ye Leaves ! whenas those lilly hands,
Which hold my life in their dead-doing might,
Shall handle you, and hold in Love's soft bands,
Like captives trembling at the victor's sight.
And happy Lines ! on which with starry light
Those laming eyes will deign sometimes to look,
And read the sorrows of my dying spright,
Written with tears in heart's close bleeding book.
And happy Rimes ! bath'd in the sacred brook
Of Helicon, whence she derived is,
When ye behold that angel's blessed look,
My soul's long-lacked food, my heaven's bliss,
Leaves, Lines, and Rimes, seek her to please alone,
Whom if ye please, I care for other none.

II.

UNQUIET thought, whom at the first I bred
Of th' inward bale of my love-pined heart,
And sithence have with sighs and sorrow fed,
Till greater than my womb thou woxen art,
Break forth at length out of the inner part,
In which thou lurkest like to vipers' brood,
And seek some succour, both to ease my smart,
And also to sustain thy self with food :
But if in presence of that fairest proud
Thou chance to come, fall lowly at her feet,
And with meek humbless and afflicted mood
Pardon for thee, and grace for me, entreat ;
Which if she grant, then live, and my love cherish ;
If not, die soon, and I with thee will perish.

III.

THE sovereign beauty which I do admire,
Witness the world how worthy to be prais'd,
The light whereof hath kindled heavenly fire
In my frail spirit, by her from baseness rais'd,
That being now with her huge brightness daz'd,
Base thing I can no more endure to view,
But looking still on her, I stand amaz'd
At wondrous sight of so celestial hue.
So when my tongue would speak her praises due,
It stopped is with thought's astonishment,
And when my pen would write her titles true,
It ravish'd is with fancy's wonderment ;
Yet in my heart I then both speak and write
The wonder that my wit cannot indite,

IV.

NEW year forth looking out of Janus' gate,
Doth seem to promise hope of new delight,
And bidding th' old adieu, his passed date
Bids all old thoughts to die in dumpish spright.
And calling forth out of sad Winter's night
Fresh love, that long hath slept in cheerless bower,
Wills him awake, and soon about him dight
His wanton wings, and darts of deadly power :
For lusty Spring, now in his timely howre,
Is ready to come forth, him to receive,
And warns the Earth, with divers-colour'd flowre,
To deck herself, and her fair mantle weave; [reign,
Then you, fair Flowre! in whom fresh youth doth
Prepare your self new love to entertain.

V.

RUDELY thou wrongest my dear heart's desire,
In finding fault with her too portly pride:
'The thing in which I do most in her admire,
Is of the world unworthy most envie;
For in those lofty looks is close implide
Sorn of base things and 'sdeign of foul dishonour,
Threatning rash eyes which gaze on her so wide,
That loosely they ne dare to look upon her.
Such pride is praise, such portliness is honour,
That boldness innocence bears in her eyes,
And her fair countenance, like a goodly banner,
Spreads in defiance of all enemies.
Was never in this world ought worthy tride,
Without some sparke of such self-pleasing pride.

VI.

BE nought dismaid that her unmoved mind
Doth still persist in her rebellious pride ;
Such love not like to lusts of baser kind,
The harder won, the firmer will abide.
The dureful oak, whose sap is not yet dride;
Is long e'er it conceive the kindling fire,
But when it once doth burn, it doth divide
Great heat, and make his flames to heaven aspire :
So hard it is to kindle new desire
In gentle breast that shall endure for ever ;
Deep is the wound that dints the parts entire
With chaste effects that nought but death can sever.
'Then think not long in taking little pain
To knit the knot that ever shall remain.

VII.

FAIR eyes, the mirrour of my mazed heart,
What wondrous vertue is contain'd in you,
The which both life and death forth from you dart
Into the object of your mighty view ?
For when ye mildly look with lovely hue,
Then is my soul with life and love inspir'd ;
But when ye lowre, or look on me askew,
Then do I die, as one with lightning fir'd.
But since that life is more than death desir'd,
Look ever lovely, as becomes you best ;
That your bright beames of my weak eyes admir'd,
May kindle living fire within my brest.
Such life should be the honour of your light,
Such death the sad ensample of your might.

VIII.

MORE than most fair, full of the living fire
Kindled above, unto the Maker near ;
No eyes but joys, in which all powers conspire,
That to the world nought else be counted dear :
Through your bright beams doth not the blinded guest
Shoot out his darts to base affection's wound ?
But angels come to lead frail minds to rest
In chaste desires, on heavenly beauty bound.
You frame my thoughts, and fashion me within ;
You stop my tongue, and teach my heart to speak ;
You calm the storm that passion did begin,
Strong through your cause, but by your vertue weak.
Dark is the world where your light shined never ;
Well is he born that may behold you ever.

IX.

LONG-WHILE I sought to what I might compare
Those powerful eyes which lighten my dark spright,
Yet find I nought on earth to which I dare
Resemble th' image of the goodly light.
Not to the sun, for they do shine by night ;
Nor to the moon, for they are changed never ;
Nor to the stars, for they have purer sight ;
Nor to the fire, for they consume not ever ;
Nor to the lightning, for they still presever ;
Nor to the diamond, for they are more tender ;
Nor unto crystal, for nought may them sever ;
Nor unto glass, such baseness mought offend her :
Then to the Maker self they likest be,
Whose light doth lighten all that here we see.

X.

UNRIGHTEOUS lord of Love! what law is this,
That me thou makest thus tormented be,
The whiles she lordeth in licentious bliss
Of her free-will scorning both thee and me?
See how the tyranness doth joy to see
The huge massacres which her eyes do make,
And humbled hearts brings captive unto thee,
That thou of them mayst mighty vengeance take.
But her proud heart do thou a little shake,
And that high look, with which she doth control
All this world's pride, bow to a baser make,
And all her faults in thy black book enrol,
That I may laugh at her in equal sort
As she doth laugh at me, and makes my pain her sport.

XI.

DAILY when I do seek and sue for peace,
And hostages do offer for my truth,
She, cruel warriour, doth herself address
To battel, and the weary war renew'th;
Ne will be mov'd with reason or with ruth
To grant small respite to my restless toil,
But greedily her fell intent persu'th,
Of my poor life to make unpitied spoil.
Yet my poor life, all sorrows to assoil,
I would her yield, her wrath to pacifie,
But then she seeks, with torment and turmoil,
To force me live, and will not let me die.
All pain hath end, and every war hath peace;
But mine no price nor prayer may surcease.

XII.

ONE day I sought with heart-thrilling eyes
To make a truce, and terms to entertain,
All fearless then of so false enemies,
Which sought me to entrap in treason's train :
So as I then disarmed did remain,
A wicked ambush which lay hidden long
In the close covert of her guileful eye,
Thence breaking forth, did thick about me throng.
Too feeble I t'abide the burnt so strong,
Was forc'd to yield my self into their hands,
Who me captiving, straight with rigorous wrong
Have ever since kept me in cruel bands :
So, Lady, now to you I do complain
Against your eyes, that justice I may gain.

XIII.

IN that proud port which her so goodly graceth,
Whiles her fair face she rears up to the sky,
And to the ground her eye-lids low embraceth,
Most goodly temperature ye may descry,
Mild humbless, mixt with awful majesty ;
For looking on the earth, whence she was born,
Her mind remembreth her mortality ;
What-so is fairest shall to earth return.
But that some lofty countenance seems to scorn
Base thing, and think how she to heaven may clime,
Treading down earth as loathsome and forlorn,
That hinders heavenly thoughts with drossy slime ;
Yet lowly still vouchsafe to look on me,
Such lowliness shall make you lofty be.

XIV.

RETURN again, my forces, late dismaid,
Unto the siege by you abandon'd quite;
Great shame it is to leave like one afraid,
So fair a piece for one repulse so light,
'Gainst such strong castles needeth greater might
Than those small forces ye were wont belay;
Such haughty minds, enur'd to handy fight,
Disdain to yield unto the first assay.
Bring, therefore, all the forces that ye may,
And lay incessant battry to her heart;
Plaints, prayers, vows, ruth, sorrow, and dismay,
Those engins can the proudest love convert;
And if those fail, fall down and die before her,
So dying live, and living do adore her.

XV.

YE tradeful Merchants! that with weary toil
Do seek most precious things to make your gain,
And both the Indias of their treasure spoil,
What needeth you to seek so far in vain?
For, lo! my love doth in herself contain
All this world's riches that may far be found;
If saphyrs, lo! her eyes be saphyrs plain;
If rubies, lo! her lips be rubies sound;
If pearls, her teeth be pearls, both pure and round;
If ivory, her forehead ivory ween;
If gold, her locks are finest gold on ground;
If silver, her fair hands are silver-sheen:
But that which fairest is, but few behold,
Her mind, adorn'd with vertues manifold.

xvi.

ONE day as I unwarily did gaze
On those fair eyes my love's immortal light
The whiles my stonish'd heart stood in amaze,
Through sweet allusion of her look's delight,
I mote perceive how in her glancing sight
Legions of Loves with little wings did fly,
Darting their deadly arrows fiery bright
At every rash beholder passing by :
One of those archers closely I did spy
Aiming his arrow at my very heart,
When suddenly, with twinkle of her eye,
The damsel broke his misintended dart :
Had she not so done sure I had been slain,
Yet as it was I hardly scap'd with pain.

xvii.

THE glorious pourtract of that angel's face,
Made to amaze weak mens confused skill,
And this world's worthless glory to embrace,
What pen, what pensil, can express her fill ?
For though he colours could devise at will,
And eke his learned hand at pleasure guide,
Lest trembling it his workmanship should spill,
Yet many wondrous things there are beside :
'The sweet eye-glances, that like arrows glide,
'The charming smiles that rob sense from the heart;
'The lovely pleasance, and the lofty pride,
Cannot expressed be by any art :
A greater craftsman's hand thereto doth need,
That can express the life of things indeed.

XVIII.

THE rolling wheel, that runneth often round,
The hardest steel in tract of time doth tear ;
And drizzling drops, that often do redound,
The firmest flint doth in continuance wear :
Yet cannot I, with many a dropping tear,
And long intreaty, soften her hard heart,
That she will once vouchsafe my plaint to hear,
Or look with pity on my painful smart :
But when I plead, she bids me play my part ;
And when I weep, she says tears are but water ;
And when I sigh, she says I know the art ;
And when I wail, she turns herself to laughter :
So do I weep and wail, and plead in vain,
Whiles she as steel and flint doth still remain.

XIX.

THE merry cuckow, messenger of spring,
His trumpet shrill hath thrice already sounded,
That warns all lovers wait upon their king,
Who now is coming forth with girland crowned ;
With noise whereof the quire of birds resounded
Their anthems sweet, devized of love's praise,
That all the woods their ecchoes back rebounded,
As if they knew the meaning of their lays :
But 'mongst them all, which did Love's honour raise,
No word was heard of her that most it ought,
But she his precept proudly disobeys,
And doth his idle message set at nought ;
Therefore, O Love ! unless she turn to thee
E'er cuckow end, let her a rebel be.

XX.

IN vain I seek and sue to her for grace,
And do mine humble heart before her pour,
The whiles her foot she in my neck doth place,
And tread my life down in the lowly flour :
And yet the lion, that is lord of power,
And reigneth over every beast in field,
In his most pride disdaineth to devour
The silly lamb that to his might doth yield :
But she, more cruel and more salvage wild
'Than either lion or the lioness,
Shames not to be with guiltless blood defil'd,
But taketh glory in her cruelty.
Fairer than fairest, let none ever say
'That ye were blooded in a yielded prey.

XXI.

WAS it the work of Nature or of Art,
Which tempred so the features of her face,
That pride and meekness, mixt by equal part,
Do both appear t'adorn her beauty's grace ?
For with mild pleasance, which doth pride displace,
She to her love doth lookers' eyes allure,
And with stern count'nance back again doth chace
Their looser looks, that stir up lusts impure.
With such strange trains her eyes she doth inure,
That with one look she doth my life dismay,
And with another doth it straight recure :
Her smile me draws, her frown me drives away.
Thus doth she train and teach me with her looks ;
Such art of eyes I never read in books.

XXII.

THIS holy season, fit to fast and pray,
Men to devotion ought to be inclin'd,
Therefore I likewise on so holy day,
For my sweet saint some service fit will find.
Her temple fair is built within my mind,
In which her glorious image placed is,
On which my thoughts do day and night attend,
Like sacred priests, that never think amiss ;
There I to her as th'author of my bliss,
Will build an altar to appease her ire,
And on the same my heart will sacrifice,
Burning in flames of pure and chaste desire ;
The which vouchsafe, O Goddess ! to accept,
Amongst thy dearest relicks to be kept.

XXIII.

PENELOPE, for her Ulysses' sake,
Deviz'd a web her wooers to deceive,
In which the work that she all day did make,
The same at night she did again unreave:
Such subtil craft my damsel doth conceive,
Th'importunate sute of my desire to shun,
For all that I in many days do weave,
In one short hour I find by her undun.
So when I think to end that I begun,
I must begin and never bring to end ;
Forth with one look she spills that long I spun,
And with one word my whole year's work doth rend.
Such labour like the spider's web I find,
Whose fruitless work is broken with least wind.

XXIV.

WHEN I behold that beauty's wonderment,
And rare perfection of each goodly part,
Of Nature's skill the only complement,
I honour and admire the Maker's art;
But when I feel the bitter baleful smart
Which her fair eyes unwares do work in me,
That death out of their shiny beams do dart,
I think that I a new Pandora see,
Whom all the gods in counsel did agree
Into this sinful world from heaven to send,
That she to wicked men a scourge should be
For all their faults with which they did offend.
But since ye are my scourge, I will intreat,
That for my faults ye will me gently beat.

XXV.

How long shall this like dying life endure,
And know no end of its own misery,
But waste and wear away in terms unsure,
'Twixt fear and hope depending doubtfully?
Yet better were attonce to let me die,
And shew the last ensample of your pride,
Than to torment me thus with cruelty,
To prove your pow'r, which I too well have tride.
But yet if in your harden'd breast ye hide
A close intent at last to show me grace,
Then all the woes and wrecks which I abide,
As means of bliss I gladly will embrace,
And wish that more and greater they might be,
That greater meed at last may turn to me.

XXVI.

SWEET is the rose, but grows upon a brere ;
Sweet is the juniper, but sharp his bough ;
Sweet is the eglantine, but pricketh near ;
Sweet is the firbloom, but his branches rough ;
Sweet is the cypress, but his rind is tough ;
Sweet is the nut, but bitter is his pill ;
Sweet is the broom-flowre, but yet sour enough ;
And sweet is moly, but his root is ill :
So every sweet with sour is tempred still.
That maketh it be coveted the more ;
For easy things, that may be got at will,
Most sorts of men do set but little store.
Why then should I account of little pain,
That endless pleasure shall unto me gain ?

XXVII.

FAIR Proud ! now tell me why should fair be proud,
Sith all world's glory is but dross unclean ?
And in the shade of death itself should shroud,
How-ever now thereof ye little ween.
That goodly idol, now so gay beseen,
Shall doff her fleshs borrow'd fair attire,
And be forgot as it had never been,
That many now much worship and admire :
Ne any then shall after it inquire,
Ne any mention shall thereof remain,
But what this verse, that never shall expire,
Shall to you purchase with her thankless pain.
Fair ! be no longer proud of that shall perish,
But that which shall you make immortal cherish.

XXVIII.

THE laurel leaf, which you this day do wear,
Gives me great hope of your relenting mind,
For since it is the badge which I do bear,
Ye bearing it do seem to me inclin'd :
The power thereof, which oft in me I find,
Let it likewise your gentle breast inspire
With sweet infusion, and put you in mind
Of that proud maid whom now those leaves attire.
Proud Daphne, scorning Phœbus' lovely fire,
On the Thessalian shore from him did flie,
For which the gods, in their revengeful ire,
Did her transform into a laurel-tree.
Then fly no more, fair Love! from Phœbus' chace,
But in your breast his leaf and love embrace.

XXIX.

SEE how the stubborn damsel doth deprave
My simple meaning with disdainful scorn,
And by the bay which I unto her gave,
Accounts my self her captive quite forlorn.
The bay, quoth she, is of the victor born,
Yielded them by the vanquisht as their meeds,
And they therewith do poets' heads adorn,
To sing the glory of their famous deeds ;
But sith she will the conquest challenge needs,
Let her accept me as her faithful thrall,
That her great triumph which my skill exceeds,
I may in trump of Fame blaze over all ;
Then would I deck her head with glorious bays,
And fill the world with her victorious praise.

XXX.

My love is like to ice, and I to fire ;
How comes it, then, that this her cold so great
Is not dissolv'd through my so hot desire,
But harder grows the more I her entreat ?
Or how comes it that my exceeding heat
Is not delaid by her heart-frozen cold,
But that I burn much more in boiling sweat,
And feel my flames augmented manifold ?
What more miraculous thing may be told,
That fire, which all things melts, should harden ice,
And ice which is congeal'd with senseless cold,
Should kindle fire by wonderful device ?
Such is the power of love in gentle mind,
That it can alter all the course of kind.

XXXI.

Alas ! why hath Nature to so hard a heart
Given so goodly gifts of beauty's grace,
Whose pride depraves each other better part,
And all those precious ornaments deface ?
Sith to all other beasts of bloody race,
A dreadful countenance she given hath,
That with their terrour all the rest may chace,
And warn to shun the danger of their wrath :
But my proud one doth work the greater scath
Through sweet allurements of her lovely hue,
That she the better may in bloody bath
Of such poor thrall her cruell hands embrew ;
But did she know how ill these two accord,
Such cruelty she would have soon abhorr'd.

XXXII.

THE painful smith, with force of fervent heat,
The hardest iron soon doth mollifie,
That with his heavy sledge he can it beat,
And fashion to what he it list apply ;
Yet cannot all these flames in which I fry
Her heart, more hard than iron, soft awhit,
Ne all the plaints and prayers with which I
Do beat on th'anvile of her stubborn wit ;
But still the more she fervent sees my fit,
The more she friezeth in her wilful pride,
And harder grows the harder she is smit,
With all the plaints which to her be applide :
What then remains but I to ashes burn,
And she to stones at length all frozen turn ?

XXXIII.

GREAT wrong I do, I can it not deny,
To that most sacred empress, my dear dread,
Not finishing her Queen of Faery,
That mote enlarge her living praises dead.
But, Lodwick, this of grace to me aread ;
Do ye not think th'accomplishment of it
Sufficient work for one man's simple head,
All were it as the rest, but rudely writ ?
How then should I, without another wit,
Think ever to endure so tedious toil ?
Sith that this one is tost with troublous fit
Of a proud love that doth my spirit spoil.
Cease then till she vouchsafe to grant me rest,
Or lend you me another living breast.

XXXIV.

LIKE as a ship that through the ocean wide,
By conduct of some star, doth make her way,
When as a storm hath dim'd her trusty guide,
Out of her course doth wander far astray ;
So I, whose star, that wont with her bright ray
Me to direct, with clouds is over-cast,
Do wander now in darkness and dismay,
'Through hidden perils round about me plac'd ;
Yet hope I will that when this storm is past
My Helice, the loadstar of my life,
Will shine again, and look on me at last
With lovely light, to clear my cloudy grief :
'Till then I wander careful, comfortless,
In secret sorrow and sad pensiveness.

XXXV.

MY hungry eyes, through greedy covetise
Still to behold the object of their pain,
With no contentment can themselves suffice,
But having pine, and having not complain :
For lacking it they cannot life sustain,
And having it they gaze on it the more ;
In their amazement like Narcissus vain,
Whose eyes him starv'd ; so plenty makes me poor.
Yet are mine eyes so filled with the store
Of that fair sight, that nothing else they brook,
But loath the things which they did like before,
And can no more endure on them to look,
All this world's glory seemeth vain to me,
And all their shows but shadows saving she.

XXXVI.

TELL me, when shall these weary woes have end ?
Or shall their ruthless torment never cease ;
But all my days in pining languor spend,
Without hope of asswagement or release.
Is there no means for me to purchase peace ?
Or make agreement with her thrilling eyes,
But that their cruelty doth still increase,
And daily more augment my miseries.
But when ye have shew'd all extremities,
Then think how little glory ye have gain'd
By slaying him, whose life though ye despise,
Mote have your life in honour long maintain'd ;
But by his death, which some perhaps will mone,
Ye shall condemned be of many a one.

XXXVII.

WHAT guile is this, that those her golden tresses
She doth attire under a net of gold,
And with sly skill so cunningly them dresses,
That which is gold or hair may scarce be told ?
Is it that mens frail eyes, which gaze too bold,
She may entangle in that golden snare,
And being caught, may craftily enfold
Their weaker hearts, which are not well aware ?
Take heed, therefore, mine Eyes ! how ye do stare
Henceforth too rashly on that guileful net,
In which, if ever ye entrapped are,
Out of her bands ye by no means shall get.
Fondness it were for any, being free,
To covet fetters, though they golden be.

XXXVIII.

ARION, when through tempests cruel wrack
He forth was throne into the greedy seas,
Through the sweet music which his harp did make,
Allur'd a dolphin him from death to ease;
But my rude musick, which was wont to please
Some dainty ears, cannot with any skill
The dreadful tempest of her wrath appease,
Nor move the dolphin from her stubborn will,
But in her pride she doth persevere still,
All careless how my life for her decays,
Yet with one word she can it save or spill;
To spill were pity, but to save were praise.
Chuse rather to be prais'd for doing good,
Than to be blam'd for spilling guiltless blood.

XXXIX.

SWEET Smile, the daughter of the Queen of Love,
Expressing all thy mother's powerful art,
With which she wons to temper angry Jove,
When all the gods he threats with thundring dart,
Sweet is thy vertue, as thy self sweet art;
For when on me thou shinedst late in sadness,
A melting pleasance ran through every part,
And me revived with heart-robbing gladness.
Whilst rapt with joy resembling heavenly madness,
My soul was ravisht quite as in a trance,
And feeling thence no more her sorrow's sadness,
Fed on the fulness of that chearful glance;
More sweet than nectar or ambrosial meat
Seem'd every bit which thenceforth I did eat.

XL.

MARK when she smiles with amiable chear,
And tell me wheretof can ye liken it,
When on each eye-lid sweetly do appear
An hundred graces, as in shade to sit:
Likest it seemeth, in my simple wit,
Unto the fair sunshine in summer's-day,
That when a dreadful storm away is flit,
Through the broad world doth spread his goodly ray,
At sight whereof each bird that sits on spray,
And every beast that to his den was fled,
Come forth afresh out of their late dismay,
And to the light lift up their drooping head:
So my storm-beaten heart likewise is chear'd
With that sun-shine, when cloudy looks are clear'd.

XLI.

Is it her nature, or is it her will,
To be so cruel to an humbled foe?
If nature, then she may it mend with skill;
If will, then she at will may will forgoe;
But if her nature and her will be so,
That she will plague the man that loves her most,
And take delight t' encrease a wretch's woe,
Then all her nature's goodly gifts are lost,
And that same glorious beauty's idle boast
Is but a bait such wretches to beguile,
As being long in her love's tempest tost,
She means at last to make her piteous spoil,
O fairest Fair! let never it be nam'd,
That so fair beauty was so foully sham'd!

XLII.

THE love which me so cruelly tormenteth,
So pleasing is in my extreamest pain,
That all the more my sorrow it augmenteth,
The more I love, and do embrace my bane ;
Ne do I wish (for wishing were but vain)
To be acquit fro my continual smart,
But joy her thral for ever to remain,
And yield for pledge my poor captived heart,
The which, that it from her may never start,
Let her, if please her, bind with adamant chain,
And from all wandring loves which mote pervart,
In safe assurance strongly it restrain ;
Only let her abstain from cruelty,
And dome me not before my time to die.

XLIII.

SHALL I then silent be, or shall I speak ?
And if I speak, her wrath renew I shall ;
And if I silent be my heart will break,
Or choked be with overflowing gall.
What tyranny is this my heart to thrall,
And eke my tongue with proud restraint to tie,
That neither I may speak nor think at all,
But like a stupid stock in silence die ?
Yet I my heart with silence secretly
Will teach to speak, and my just cause to plead,
And eke mine eyes with meek humility,
Love-learned letters to her eyes to read, [spell,
Which her deep wit, that true heart's thought can
Will soon conceive, and learn to construe well.

XLIV.

WHEN those renowned noble peers of Greece,
Through stubborn pride among themselves did jar,
Forgetful of the famous Golden Fleece,
Then Orpheus with his harp their strife did bar:
But this continual, cruel, civil war,
The which my self against my self do make,
Whilst my weak powers of passions warreid are,
No skill can stint, nor reason can aslake:
But when in hand my tuneless harp I take,
Then do I more augment my foes despight,
And grief renew, and passions do awake
To battail, fresh against my self to fight;
'Mongst whom the more I seek to settle peace,
The more I find their malice to increace.

XLV.

LEAVE, Lady! in your glass of crystal clean
Your goodly self for ever more to view,
And in my self, my inward self I mean,
Most lively like behold your semblant true.
Within my heart, though hardly it can shew
Thing so divine to view of earthly eye,
The fair idea of your celestial hue,
And every part, remains immortally;
And were it not that through your cruelty,
With sorrow dimmed and deform'd it were,
The goodly image of your visnomy,
Clearer than crystal would therein appear;
But if your self in me ye plain will see, [be.
Remove the cause by which your fair beams darkned

XLVI.

WHEN my abode's prefixed time is spent,
My cruel fair straight bids me wend away ;
But then from heaven most hideous storms are sent,
As willing me against her will to stay.
Whom then shall I, or heaven or her obey ?
The heavens know best what is the best for me ;
But as she will, whose will my life doth sway,
My lower heaven, so it perforce must be :
But ye, high Heavens, that all this sorrow see,
Sith all your tempests cannot me hold back,
Assuage your storms, or else both you and she
Will both together me too sorely wrack,
Enough it is for one man to sustain
The storms which she alone on me doth rain.

XLVII.

TRUST not the treason of those smiling looks,
Until ye have their guileful trains well tride,
For they are like but unto golden hooks,
That from the foolish fish their bates do hide ;
So she, with flattering smiles, weak hearts doth guide
Unto her love, and tempt to their decay,
Whom being caught, she kills with cruel pride,
And feeds at pleasure on the wretched prey ;
Yet even whilst her bloody hands them slay,
Her eyes look lovely, and upon them smile,
That they take pleasure in their cruel play,
And dying, do themselves of pain beguile.
O mighty charm, which makes men love their bane,
And think they die with pleasure, live with pain !

XLVIII.

INNOCENT Paper ! whom too cruel hand
Did make the matter to avenge her ire,
And ere she could thy cause well understand,
Did sacrifice unto the greedy fire ;
Well worthy thou to have found better hire
Than so bad end, for hereticks ordain'd ;
Yet heresie nor treason didst conspire,
But plead thy master's cause, unjustly pain'd ;
Whom she, all careless of his grief, constrain'd
To utter forth the anguish of his heart,
And would not hear, when he to her complain'd
The piteous passion of his dying smart :
Yet live for ever, though against her will,
And speak her good, though she requite it ill.

XLIX.

FAIR Cruel ! why are ye so fierce and cruel ?
Is it because your eyes have power to kill ?
Then know, that mercy is the mighty's jewel,
And greater glory think to save than spill,
But if it be your pleasure and proud will
To shew the power of your imperious eyes,
Then not on him that never thought you ill,
But bend your force against your enemies :
Let them feel th' utmost of your cruelties,
And kill with looks, as cockatrices do ;
But him that at your footstool humbled lies
With merciful regard, give mercy to :
Such mercy shall you make admir'd to be ;
So shall you live by giving life to me.

L.

LONG languishing in double malady
Of my heart's wound and of my body's grief,
There came to me a leach that would apply
Fit med'cines for my body's best relief:
Vain Man! quoth I, that hast but little prief
In deep discovery of the mind's disease,
Is not the heart of all the body chief,
And rules the members as it self doth please?
Then with some cordials seek for to appease
The inward langour of my wounded heart,
And then my body shall have shortly ease:
But such sweet cordials pass physicians' art.
Then my life's leach, do you your skill reveal,
And with one salve both heart and body heal.

LI.

DO I not see the fairest images
Of hardest marble are of purpose made,
For that they should endure through many ages,
Ne let their famous monimets to fade?
Why then do I, untrain'd in lover's trade,
Her hardness blame, which I should more commend,
Sith never ought was excellent assaid,
Which was not hard t'achive and bring to end;
Ne ought so hard, but he that would attend
Mote soften it, and to his will allure;
So do I hope her stubborn heart to bend,
And that it then more stedfast will endure:
Only my pains will be the more to get her,
But having her, my joy will be the greater.

LII.

So oft as homeward I from her depart,
I goe like one that, having lost the field,
Is prisoner led away with heavy heart,
Dispoil'd of warlike arms and knownen shield :
So do I now my self a prisoner yield
To sorrow and to solitary pain,
From presence of my dearest dear exil'd,
Long-while alone in langour to remain.
Then let no thought of joy, or pleasure vain,
Dare to approach, that may my solace breed,
But suddain dumps, and drery sad disdain
Of all world's gladness more my torment feed :
So I her absence will my penance make,
That of my presence I my meed may take.

LIII.

THE panther, knowing that his spotted hide
Doth please all beasts, but that his looks them fray,
Within a bush his dreadful head doth hide,
To let them gaze, whilst he on them may prey :
Right so my cruel fair with me doth play,
For with the goodly semblance of her hue
She doth allure me to mine own decay,
And then no mercy will unto me shew.
Great shame it is thing so divine in view,
Made for to be the world's most ornament,
To make the bait her gazers to imbrew ;
Good shames to be to ill an instrument ;
But mercy doth with beauty best agree,
As in their Maker ye them best may see.

LIV.

OF this world's theater, in which we stay,
My love, like the spectator, idle sits,
Beholding me that all the pageants play,
Disguising diversly my troubled wits.
Sometimes I joy, when glad occasion fits,
And mask in mirth like to a comedy ;
Soon after, when my joy to sorrow flits,
I wail, and make my woes a tragedy :
Yet she beholding me with constant eye,
Delights not in my mirth nor rues my smart ;
But when I laugh, she mocks ; and when I cry,
She laughs, and hardens evermore her heart :
What then can move her ? if nor mirth nor mone,
She is no woman, but a sensless stone.

LV.

So oft as I her beauty do behold,
And there-with do her cruelty compare,
I marvail of what substance was the mould
The which her made attonce so cruel fair.
Not earth, for her high thoughts more heavenly are ;
Not water, for her love doth burn like fire ;
Not air, for she is not so light or rare ;
Not fire, for she doth freeze with faint desire :
Then needs another element inquire
Whereof she mote be made, that is the sky ;
For to the heaven her haughty looks aspire,
And eke her love is pure immortal hy.
Then sith to heaven ye likened are the best,
Be like in mercy as in all the rest.

LVI.

FAIR ye be sure, but cruel and unkind,
As is a tyger, that with greediness
Hunts after blood, when he by chance doth find
A feeble beast, doth felly him oppress.
Fair be ye sure, but proud and pitiless
As is a storm, that all things doth prostrate,
Finding a tree alone all comfortless,
Beats on it strongly it to ruinate.
Fair be ye sure, but hard and obstinate
As is a rock amidst the raging floods,
'Gainst which a ship, of succour desolate,
Doth suffer wreck both of her self and goods.
That ship, that tree, and that same beast, am I,
Whom ye do wreck, do ruin, and destroy.

LVII.

SWEET Warriour! when shall I have peace with
High time it is this war now ended were, [you?
Which I no longer can endure to sue,
Ne your incessant battry more to bear:
So weak my powers, so sore my wounds appear,
That wonder is how I should live a jot,
Seeing my heart through-launched every where
With thousand arrows which your eyes have shot:
Yet shoot ye sharply still, and spare me not,
But glory think to make these cruel stoures.
Ye cruel One! what glory can be got
In slaying him that would live gladly your's?
Make peace, therefore, and grant me timely grace,
That all my wounds will heal in little space.

LVIII.

To her that is most assured to herself.

WEAK is th' assurance that weak flesh repositeth
 In her own powre, and scorneth others' aid ;
 That soonest falls, when as she most supposeth
 Her self assur'd, and is of nought affraid.
 All flesh is frail, and all her strength unstaid,
 Like a vain bubble blown up with air ;
 Devouring Time and changeful Chance have prey'd
 Her glorious pride, that none may it repair.
 Ne none so rich or wise, so strong or fair,
 But faileth, trusting on his own assurance ;
 And he that standeth on the highest stair
 Falls lowest ; for on earth nought hath endurance.
 Why then do ye, proud Fair ! misdeem so farr,
 That to your self ye most assured are ?

LIX.

THRICE happy she that is so well assur'd
 Unto her self, and settled so in heart,
 That neither will for better be allur'd
 Ne fears to worse with any chance to start,
 But like a steddly ship, doth strongly part
 The raging waves, and keeps her course aright ;
 Ne ought for tempest doth from it depart,
 Ne ought for fairer weather's false delight.
 Such self assurance need not fear the spight
 Of grudging foes, ne favour seek of friends ;
 But in the stay of her own stedfast might,
 Neither to one her self nor other bends.
 Most happy shee that most assur'd doth rest,
 But he most happy who such one loves best.

LX.

THEY that in course of heavenly sphears are skill'd,
To every planet point his sundry year,
In which her circles' voyage is fulfill'd,
As Mars in threescore years doth run his sphear.
So since the winged god his planet clear
Began in me to move, one year is spent,
The which doth longer unto me appear
Than all those forty which my life out-went.
Then by that count, which lovers books invent,
The sphear of Cupid forty years contains,
Which I have wasted in long languishment,
That seem'd the longer for my greater pains :
But let my love's fair planet short her ways
This year ensuing, or else short my days.

LXI.

THE glorious image of the Maker's beauty,
My sovereign Saint ! the idol of my thought,
Dare not henceforth, above the bounds of duty,
T'accuse of pride, or rashly blame for ought ;
For being, as she is, divinely wrought,
And of the brood of angels heav'nly born,
And with the crew of blessed saints upbrought,
Each of which did her with her gifts adorn,
The bud of joy, the blossom of the morn,
The beam of light, whom mortal eyes admire,
What reason is it then but she should scorn
Base things, that to her love too bold aspire ?
Such heav'nly forms ought rather worshipt be,
Than dare be lov'd by men of mean degree.

LXII.

THE weary Year his race now having run,
The new begins his compast course anew;
With shew of morning mild he hath begun,
Betokening peace and plenty to ensew.
So let us, which this change of weather view,
Change eke our minds, and former lives amend;
The old year's sins forepast, let us eschew,
And fly the faults with which we did offend:
Then shall the new-year's joy forth freshly send
Into the glooming world his gladsom ray,
And all these storms which now his beauty blend,
Shall turn to calms, and timely clear away.
So likewise, Love! cheer you your heavy spright,
And change old year's annoy to new delight.

LXIII.

AFTER long storms and tempests sad assay,
Which hardly I endured heretofore,
In dread of death and dangerous dismay,
With which my silly bark was tossed sore,
I do at length descry the happy shore,
In which I hope ere long for to arrive;
Fair soil it seems from far, and fraught with store
Of all that dear and dainty is alive.
Most happy he that can at last atchieve
The joyous safety of so sweet a rest,
Whose least delight sufficeth to deprive
Remembrance of all pains which him oppress.
All pains are nothing in respect of this,
All sorrows short that gain eternal bliss.

LXIV.

COMING to kiss her lips (such grace I found)
Me seem'd I smelt a garden of sweet flowres,
That dainty odours from them threw around,
For damzels fit to deck their lovers' bowres.
Her lips did smell like unto gilliflowres,
Her ruddy cheeks like unto roses red,
Her snowy brows like budded bellamoures,
Her lovely eyes like pinks but newly spread,
Her goodly bosom like a strawberry bed,
Her neck like to a bunch of cullambines,
Her brest like lillies ere their leaves be shed,
Her nipples like young blossom'd jessamines :
Such fragrant flowres do give most odorous smell,
But her sweet odour did them all excel.

LXV.

THE doubt which ye misdeem, fair love ! is vain,
That fondly fear to lose your liberty,
When losing one, two liberties ye gain,
And make him bound that bondage erst did fly.
Sweet be the bands the which true Love doth tye,
Without constraint or dread of any ill ;
The gentle bird feels no captivity
Within her cage, but sings and feeds her fill.
There pride dare not approach, nor discord spill
The league 'twixt them, that loyal love hath bound,
But simple truth and mutual good-will
Seeks with sweet peace to salve each other's wound ;
There Faith doth fearless dwell in brasen towre,
And spotless Pleasure builds her sacred bowre.

LXVI.

To all those happy blessings which ye have
With plenteous hand by heaven upon you thrown,
This one disparagement they to you gave,
That ye your love lent to so mean a one :
Ye whose high words, surpassing paragon,
Could not on earth have found one fit for mate,
Ne but in heaven matchable to none,
Why did ye stoop unto so lowly state ?
But ye thereby much greater glory gate
Than had ye sorted with a prince's peer ;
For now your light doth more it self dilate,
And in my darkness greater doth appear :
Yet since your light hath once enlumin'd me,
With my reflex your's shall encreased be.

LXVII.

LIKE as a huntsman after weary chace,
Seeing the game from him escape away,
Sits down to rest him in some shady place,
With panting hounds beguiled of their prey ;
So after long pursute and vain assay,
When I all weary had the chace forsook,
The gentle deer return'd the self-same way,
Thinking to quench her thirst at the next brook ;
There she beholding me with milder look,
Sought not to fly, but fearless still did bide,
Till I in hand her yet half trembling took,
And with her own good-will her firmly tide :
Strange thing me seem'd to see a beast so wild
So goodly wone, with her own will beguil'd.

LXVIII.

MOST glorious Lord of life that on this day
Didst make thy triumph over Death and Sin,
And having harrow'd hell, didst bring away
Captivity thence captive, us to win ;
This joyous day, dear Lord ! with joy begin,
And grant that we for whom thou diddest dy,
Being with thy dear blood clean wash'd from sin,
May live for ever in felicity ;
And that thy love we weighing worthily,
May likewise love thee for the same again ;
And for thy sake, that all-like dear didst buy,
With love may one another entertain.
So let us love, dear Love ! like as we ought ;
Love is the lesson which the Lord us taught.

LXIX.

THE famous warriours of the antique world
Us'd trophees to erect in stately wise,
In which they would the records have enroll'd
Of their great deeds and valorous emprise.
What trophee, then, shall I most fit devise,
In which I may record the memory
Of my love's conquest, peerless beauty's prise,
Adorn'd with honour, love, and chastity ?
Even this verse, vow'd to eternity,
Shall be thereof immortal moniment,
And tells her praise to all posterity,
That may admire such world's rare wonderment,
The happy purchase of my glorious spoil,
Gotten at last with labour and long toil.

LXX.

FRESH Spring, the herald of love's mighty king,
In whose coat-armour richly are displaid
All sorts of flowres the which on earth do spring,
In goodly colours gloriously array'd,
Go to my love, where she is careless laid,
Yet in her winter's bowre not well awake,
Tell her the joyous Time will not be staid,
Unless she do him by the fore-lock take :
Bid her, therefore, her self soon ready make
To wait on Love amongst his lovely crew,
Where every one that misseth then her make
Shall be by him amearst with penance dew.
Make haste, therefore, sweet Love! whilst it is prime,
For none can call again the passed time.

LXXI.

I JOY to see how in your drawn work
Your self unto the bee ye do compare,
And me unto the spider, that doth lurk
In close await to catch her unaware :
Right so your self were caught in cunning snare
Of a dear foe, and thrall'd to his love,
In whose straight bands ye now captived are
So firmly, that ye never may remove :
But as your work is woven all about
With woodbind flowers and fragrant eglantine,
So sweet your prison you in time shall prove,
With many dear delights bedecked fine,
And all thenceforth eternal peace shall see
Between the spider and the gentle bee.

LXXII.

OFT when my spirit doth spread her bolder wings,
In mind to mount up to the purest sky,
It down is weigh'd with thought of earthly things,
And clogg'd with burden of mortality,
Where when that sovereign beauty it doth spy,
Resembling heaven's glory in her light,
Drawn with sweet pleasure's bait it back doth fly,
And unto heavens forgets her former flight.
'There my frail fancy, fed with full delight,
Doth bathe in bliss, and mantleth most at ease,
Ne thinks of other heaven, but how it might
Her heart's desire with most contentment please.
Heart need not wish none other happiness,
But here on earth to have such heaven's bliss.

LXXIII.

BEING my self captiv'd here in care,
My heart, whom none with servile bands can tie,
But the fair tresses of your golden hair,
Breaking his prison, forth to you doth fly ;
Like as a bird, that in one's hand doth spy
Desired food, to it doth make his flight ;
Even so my heart, that wont on your fair eye
To feed his fill, flies back unto your sight.
Do you him take, and in your bosom bright
Gently engage, that he may be your thrall ;
Perhaps he there may learn, with rare delight,
To sing your name and praises over all,
That it hereafter may you not repent,
Him lodging in your bosom to have lent.

LXXIV.

MOST happy letters, fram'd by skilful trade,
With which that happy name was first design'd,
The which three times thrice happy hath me made
With gifts of body, fortune, and of mind.
The first, my being to me gave by kind,
From mother's womb deriv'd by due descent;
The second, is my sovereign queen most kind,
That honour and large riches to me lent;
The third, my love, my life's last ornament,
By whom my spirit out of dust was rais'd;
To speak her praise and glory excellent,
Of all alive most worthy to be prais'd.
Ye three Elizabeths ! for ever live,
That three such graces did unto me give.

LXXV.

ONE day I wrote her name upon the strand,
But came the waves and washed it away ;
Again I wrote it with a second hand,
But came the tide, and made my pains his prey.
Vain Man ! said she, that doost in vain assay
A mortal thing so to immortalize,
For I my self shall like to this decay,
And eke my name be wiped out likewise.
Not so, quoth I, let baser things devise
To die in dust, but you shall live by fame ;
My verse your vertues rare shall eternize,
And in the heavens write your glorious name,
Where, whenas Death shall all the world subdew,
Our love shall live, and later life renew.

LXXVI.

FAIR bosom, fraught with vertue's richest treasure,
The nest of Love, the lodging of Delight,
The bowre of Bliss, the paradise of Pleasure,
The sacred harbour of that heavenly spright,
How was I ravish'd with your lovely sight,
And my frail thoughts too rashly led astray,
Whiles diving deep through amorous insight,
On the sweet spoil of beauty they did prey?
And 'twixt her paps, like early fruit in May,
Whose harvest seem'd to hasten now apace,
They loosely did their wanton wings display,
And there to rest themselves did boldly place.
Sweet thoughts, I envy your so happy rest,
Which oft I wish'd, yet never was so blest.

LXXVII.

WAS it a dream, or did I see it plain?
A goodly table of pure ivory
All spread with juncats, fit to entertain
The greatest prince with pompous royalty,
'Mongst which there in a silver dish did lie
Two golden apples of unvalu'd price,
Far passing those which Hercules came by,
Or those which Atalanta did entice;
Exceeding sweet, yet void of sinful vice,
That many sought, yet none could ever taste,
Sweet fruit of pleasure, brought from Paradise
By Love himself, and in his garden plac'd.
Her brest that table was, so richly spread, [fed.
My thoughts the guests, which could thereon have

LXXVIII.

LACKING my love, I go from place to place,
Like a young fawn that late hath lost the hind,
And seek each where where last I saw her face,
Whose image yet I carry fresh in mind.
I seek the fields, with her late footing sign'd,
I seek her bowre, with her late presence deck't;
Yet nor in field nor bowre I can her find,
Yet field and bowre are full of her aspect;
But when mine eyes I thereunto direct,
They idly back return to me again;
And when I hope to see their true object,
I find my self but fed with fancies vain.
Cease then, mine Eyes! to seek her self to see,
And let my thoughts behold her self in me.

LXXIX.

MEN call you fair, and you do credit it,
For that your self ye daily such do-see,
But the true fair, that is, the gentle wit,
And vertuous mind, is much more prais'd of me;
For all the rest, how ever fair it be,
Shall turn to naught, and lose that glorious hue;
But only that is permanent and free
From frail corruption, that doth flesh ensue:
That is true beauty; that doth argue you
To be divine, and born of heavenly seed,
Deriv'd from that fair Spirit from whom all true
And perfect beauty did at first proceed:
He only fair, and what he fair hath made;
All other fair, like flowres, untimely fade.

LXXX.

AFTER so long a race as I have run [pile.
Through Fairy-Land, which those Six Books com-
Give leave to rest me, being half foredun,
And gather to myself new breath awhile :
Then as a steed refreshed after toil,
Out of my prison I will break anew,
And stoutly will that second work assoil,
With strong endeavour and attention due.
Till then give leave to me in pleasant mew
To sport my Muse, and sing my love's sweet praise,
The contemplation of whose heavenly hue
My spirit to an higher pitch will raise :
But let her praises yet be low and mean,
Fit for the hand-maid of the Fairy Queen.

LXXXI.

FAIR is my love, when her fair golden hairs
With the loose wind ye waving chance to mark,
Fair when the rose in her red cheek appears,
Or in her eyes the fire of love doth spark ;
Fair when her brest, like a rich laden bark
With precious merchandize, she forth doth lay ;
Fair when that cloud of pride, which oft doth dark
Her goodly light, with smiles she drives away ;
But fairest she when so she doth display
The gate with pearls and rubies richly dight,
Through which her words so wise do make their way,
To bear the message of her gentle spright :
The rest be works of Nature's wonderment,
But this the work of hearts' astonishment.

LXXXII.

Joy of my life, full oft for loving you
I bless my lot, that was so lucky plac'd ;
But then the more your own mishap I rue,
That are so much by so mean love embas'd ;
For had the equal heavens so much you grac'd
In this as in the rest, ye mote invent
Some heavenly wit, whose verse could have enchas'd
Your glorious name in golden monument :
But since ye deign'd so goodly to relent
To me your thrall, in whom is little worth,
That little that I am shall all be spent
In setting your immortal praises forth,
Whose lofty argument up-lifting me,
Shall lift you up unto an high degree.

LXXXIII.

LET not one spark of filthy lustful fire
Break out, that may her sacred peace molest,
Ne one light glance of sensual desire
Attempt to work her gentle mind's unrest ;
But pure affections, bred in spotless brest,
And modest thoughts breath'd from well-temper'd
Go visit her in her chaste bowre of rest, [sprights,
Accompany'd with angel-like delights ;
There fill your self with those most joyous sights,
The which my self could never yet attain,
But speak no word to her of these sad plights,
Which her too constant stiffness doth constrain ;
Only behold her rare perfection,
And bliss your fortune's fair election.

LXXXIV.

THE world, that cannot deem of worldly things,
When I do praise her, say I do but flatter ;
So doth the cuckow, when the mavis sings,
Begins his witless note apace to chatter.
But they that skill not of so heavenly matter,
All that they know not envy or admire ;
Rather than envy let them wonder at her,
But not to deem of her desert aspire.
Deep in the closet of my parts entire
Her worth is written with a golden quill,
That me with heavenly fury doth inspire,
And my glad mouth with her sweet praises fill,
Which whenas Fame in her shrill trump shall thunder,
Let the world chuse to envy or to wonder.

LXXXV.

VENEMOUS tongue, tipt with vile adder's sting,
Of that self kind with which the Furies fell
Their snaky heads do comb, from which a spring
Of poisoned words and spiteful speeches well,
Let all the plagues and horrid pains of hell
Upon thee fall for thine accursed hire,
That with false forged lyes, which thou didst tell,
In my true love did stir up coals of ire,
The sparks whereof let kindle thine own fire,
And catching hold on thine own wicked head,
Consume thee quite, that didst with guile conspire
In my sweet peace such breaches to have bred.
Shame be thy meed, and mischief thy reward,
Due to thy self, that it for me prepar'd.

LXXXVI.

SINCE I did leave the presence of my love,
Many long weary days I have out-worn,
And many nights, that slowly seem'd to move
Their sad protract from evening until morn :
For when as day the heaven doth adorn,
I wish that night the noyous day would end ;
And whenas night hath us of light forlorn,
I wish that day would shortly re-ascend.
Thus I the time with expectation spend,
And fain my grief with changes to beguile,
That further seems his term still to extend,
And maketh every minute seem a mile :
So sorrow still doth seem too long to last,
But joyous hours do fly away too fast.

LXXXVII.

SINCE I have lackt the comfort of that light,
The which was wont to lead my thoughts astray,
I wander as in darkness of the night,
Affraid of every danger's least dismay :
Ne ought I see, though in the clearest day,
When others gaze upon their shadows vain,
But th' only image of that heavenly ray,
Whereof some glance doth in mine eye remain ;
Of which beholding the idea plain,
Through contemplation of my purest part,
With light thereof I do my self sustain,
And thereon feed my love-affamisht heart ;
But with such brightness whilst I fill my mind,
I starve my body, and mine eyes do blind.

LXXXVIII.

LIKE as the culver on the bared bough
Sits mourning for the absence of her mate,
And in her songs sends many a wishful vow
For his return, that seems to linger late ;
So I alone, now left disconsolate,
Mourn to my self the absence of my love,
And wandering here and there all desolate,
Seek with my plaints to match that mournful dove.
No joy of ought that under heaven doth hove
Can comfort me, but her own joyous sight,
Whose sweet aspect both God and man can move,
In her unspotted pleasance to delight :
Dark is my day whiles her fair light I miss,
And dead my life, that wants such lively bliss.

THE [illegible] OF [illegible]

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ELEGIAC POEMS.

DAPHNAIDA:

AN ELEGY

UPON THE DEATH OF THE NOBLE AND VERTUOUS

DOUGLAS HOWARD,

Daughter and heir of Henry Lord Howard, Viscount Byndon, and
wife of Arthur Gorges, Esquire.

To the right honourable and vertuous latly,

HELENA,

MARCHIONESS OF NORTHAMPTON.

I HAVE the rather presumed humbly to offer unto your Honour the dedication of this little Poem, for that the noble and vertuous gentlewoman of whom it is written, was by match, near allied, and in affection greatly devoted, unto your Ladyship. The occasion why I wrote the same, was as well the great good fame which I heard of her deceased, as the particular good-will which I bear unto her husband Master Arthur Gorges, a lover of learning and vertue, whose house, as your Ladyship by marriage hath honoured, so do I find the name of them, by many notable records, to be of great antiquity in this realm, and such as have ever borne themselves with honourable reputation to the world, and unspotted loyalty to their prince and country: besides, so lineally are they descended from the Howards, as that the Lady Ann Howard, eldest daughter to John Duke of Norfolk was wife to Sir Edmund, mother to Sir Edward, and grand-mother to Sir William and Sir Thomas Gorges, Knights: and therefore I do assure my self that no due honour done to the White Lion, but will be most grateful to your Ladyship, whose husband and children do so nearly participate with the blood of that noble family. So in all duty I recommend this Pamphlet, and the good acceptance thereof, to your honourable favour and protection.

Your Honour's humbly ever,

London, this first of
January, 1591.

ED. SPENSER.

DAPHNAIDA.

WHAT-EVER man he be whose heavy mind,
With grief of mournful great mishap opprest,
Fit matter for his cares increase would find,
Let read the rueful plaint herein exprest,
Of one, I ween, the woful'st man alive, 5
Even sad Alcyon, whose empierced brest
Sharp sorrow did in thousand pieces rive.

But whoso else in pleasure findeth sense,
Or in this wretched life doth take delight,
Let him be banish'd far away from hence ; 10
Ne let the Sacred Sisters here be hight,
Though they of sorrow heavily can sing,
For even their heavy song would breed delight ;
But here no tunes, save sobs and grones, shall ring.

Instead of them and their sweet harmony, 15
Let those three Fatal Sisters, whose sad hands
Do weave the direful threds of Destiny,
And in their wrath break off the vital bands,
Approach hereto ; and let the dreadful Queen
Of Darkness deep come from the Stygian strands,
And grisly ghosts, to hear this doleful teen. 20

IN gloomy evening, when the weary sun,
After his day's long labour drew to rest,
And sweaty steeds, now having over-run
The compass sky, 'gan water in the west, 25
I walk'd abroad to breathe the freshing air
In open fields, whose flow'ring pride, opprest
With early frosts, had lost their beauty fair.

There came unto my mind a troublous thought,
Which daily doth my weaker wit possess, 30
Ne lets it rest until it forth have brought
Her long-born infant, fruit of heaviness,
Which she conceived hath through meditation
Of this world's vainness and life's wretchedness,
That yet my soul it deeply doth empassion. 35

So as I mused on the misery
In which men live, and I of many most,
Most miserable man, I did espy
Where towards me a sory wight did cost,
Clad all in black, that mourning did bewray, 40
And Jacob's staff in hand devoutly crost,
Like to some pilgrim come from far away.

His careless locks, uncombed and unshorn,
Hung long adown, and beard all over-grown,
'That well he seem'd to be some wight forlorn : 45
Down to the earth his heavy eyes were thrown,
As loathing light ; and ever as he went
He sighed oft, and inly deep did grone,
As if his heart in pieces would have rent.

Approaching nigh, his face I viewed nere, 50
And by the semblant of his countenaunce
Me seem'd I had his person seen elsewhere,
Most like Alcyon seeming at a glance;
Alcyon he, the jolly shepherd swain,
That wont full merrily to pipe and daunce, 55
And fill with pleasance every wood and plain.

Yet half in doubt, because of his disguise,
I softly said, Alcyon! There-withall
He look'd aside as in disdainful wise,
Yet stayed not, till I again did call: 60
Then turning back, he said, with hollow sound,
Who is it that doth name me, woful thrall,
The wretchedst man that treads this day on ground?

One whom like wofulness impressed deep,
Hath made fit mate thy wretched case to hear, 65
And given like cause with thee to wail and weep;
Grief finds some ease by him that like does bear.
Then stay, Alcyon, gentle Shepherd! stay,
(Quoth I) till thou have to my trusty ear
Committed what thee doth so ill away. 70

Cease, foolish Man! (said he, half wrothfully)
To seek to hear that which cannot be told,
For the huge anguish which doth multiply
My dying pains, no tongue can well unfold;
Ne do I care that any should bemone 75
My hard mishap, or any weep that would,
But seek alone to weep and die alone.

Then be it so, quoth I, that thou are bent
To die alone, unpitied, unplained ;
Yet ere thou die, it were convenient 80
To tell the cause which thee thereto constrained,
Lest that the world thee dead accuse of guilt,
And say, when thou of none shalt be maintained,
That thou for secret crime thy blood hast spilt.

Who life does loath, and longs to be unbound 85
From the strong shackles of frail flesh, quoth he,
Nought cares at all what they that live on ground
Deem the occasion of his death to be ;
Rather desires to be forgotten quight,
Than question made of his calamity, 90
For hearts deep sorrow hates both life and light.

Yet sith so much thou seem'st to rue my grief,
And car'st for one that for himself cares nought,
(Sign of thy love, though nought for my relief,
For my relief exceedeth living thought) 95
I will to thee this heavy case relate :
Then hearken well till it to end be brought,
For never didst thou hear more hapless fate.

“ Whilome I us'd (as thou right well doost know)
My little flock on western downs to keep, 100
Not far from whence Sabrina's stream doth flow,
And flowrie banks with silver liquor steep ;
Nought car'd I then for worldly change or chance,
For all my joy was on my gentle sheep,
And to my pipe to caroll and to daunce. 105

“ It there befell, as I the fields did range
Fearless and free, a fair young lioness,
White as the native rose before the change
Which Venus’ blood did in her leaves impress,
I spyed playing on the grassie plain 110
Her youthful sports and kindly wantonness,
That did all other beasts in beauty stain.

“ Much was I moved at so goodly sight,
Whose like before mine eye had seldom seen,
And gan to cast how I her compass might, 115
And bring to hand that yet had never been :
So well I wrought with mildness and with pain,
That I her caught disporting on the green,
And brought away fast bound with silver chain.

“ And afterwards I handled her so fair, 120
That though by kind she stout and salvage were,
For being born an ancient lion’s heir,
And of the race that all wild beasts do fear,
Yet I her fram’d, and won so to my bent,
That she became so meek and mild of chear, 125
As the least lamb in all my flock that went :

“ For she in field, where-ever I did wend,
Would wend with me, and wait by me all day ;
And all the night that I in watch did spend,
If cause requir’d, or else in sleep, if nay, 130
She would all night by me or watch or sleep ;
And ever more when I did sleep or play,
She of my flock would take full wary keep.

“ Safe then, and safest were my silly sheep,
Ne fear’d the wolf, ne fear’d the wildest beast, 135
All were I drown’d in careless quiet deep :
My lovely lioness without behest
So careful was for them, and for my good,
That when I waked, neither most nor least
I found miscarried or in plain or wood. 140.

“ Oft did the shepherds, which my hap did hear,
And oft their lasses, which my luck envide,
Daily resort to me from far and near,
To see my lioness, whose praises wide
Were spread abroad, and when her worthiness 145
Much greater than the rude report they try’d,
They her did praise, and my good fortune bless.

“ Long thus I joyed in my happiness,
And well did hope my joy would have no end ;
But oh ! fond Man ! that in world’s fickleness 150
Reposedst hope, or weenedst her thy friend
That glories most in mortal miseries,
And daily doth her changeful counsels bend
To make new matter fit for tragedies ;

“ For whilst I was thus without dread or doubt,
A cruel Satyre with his murderous dart, 156
Greedy of mischief, ranging all about,
Gave her the fatal wound of deadly smart,
And reft from me my sweet companion,
And reft from me my love, my life, my heart : 160
My lioness (ah, woe is me !) is gone !

“ Out of the world thus was she reft away,
Out of the world, unworthy such a spoil,
And born to heaven, for heaven a fitter prey ;
Much fitter then the Lion, which with toil 165
Alcides slew, and fix’d in firmament;
Her now I seek throughout this earthly soil,
And seeking miss, and missing do lament.”

Therewith he ’gan afresh to wail and weep,
That I for pity of his heavy plight 170
Could not abstain mine eyes with tears to steep ;
But when I saw the anguish of his spright
Some deal allay’d, I him bespake again ;
Certes, Alcyon, painful is thy plight,
That it in me breeds almost equal pain. 175

Yet doth not my dull wit well understand
That riddle of thy loved lioness,
For rare it seems in reason to be scan’d,
That man, who doth the whole world’s rule possess,
Should to a beast his noble heart embase, 180
And be the vassal of his vassaless ;
Therefore more plain aread this doubtful case.

Then sighing sore, “ Daphne thou knew’st, quoth he,
She now is dead ;” ne more endur’d to say,
But fell to ground for great extremity ; 185
That I beholding it, with deep dismay
Was much apall’d, and lightly him uprearing,
Revoked life, that would have fled away,
All were my self, through grief, in deadly drearing.

Then 'gan I him to comfort all my best, 190
And with mild counsail strove to mitigate
The stormy passion of his troubled brest,
But he thereby was more empassionate ;
As stubborn steed, that is with curb restrained,
Becomes more fierce and fervent in his gate, 195
And breaking forth at last, thus dearly plained :

I.

“ What man henceforth that breatheth vital air
Will honour Heaven, or heavenly powers adore ?
Which so unjustly do their judgments share
'Mongst earthly wights, as to afflict so sore 200
The innocent, as those which do transgress,
And do not spare the best or fairest, more
Than worst or foulest, but do both oppress.

“ If this be right, why did they then create
The world so fair, sith fairness is neglected ? 205
Or why be they themselves immaculate,
If purest things be not by them respected ?
She fair, she pure, most fair, most pure she was,
Yet was by them as thing impure rejected ;
Yet she in pureness heaven it self did pass. 210

“ In pureness and in all celestial grace,
That men admire in goodly womankind
She did excel, and seem'd of angels' race,
Living on earth like angel new divin'd,
Adorn'd with wisdom and with chastity, 215
And all the dowries of a noble mind,
Which did her beauty much more beautify.

“ No age hath bred (since fair Astrea left
The sinful world) more vertue in a wight ;
And when she parted hence, with her she reft, 220
Great hope, and robb'd her race of bounty quight.
Well may the shepherd lasses now lament,
For double loss by her hath on them light,
To lose both her and bounty's ornament.

“ Ne let Eliza, royal shepherdess, 225
The praises of my parted love envy,
For she hath praises in all plenteousness
Pour'd upon her, like showers of Castaly,
By her own shepherd, Colin, her own shepherd,
That her with heavenly hymns doth deify, 230
Of rustick Muse full hardly to be better'd.

“ She is the rose, the glory of the day,
And mine the primrose in the lowly shade :
Mine, ah ! not mine ; amiss I mine did say :
Not mine, but his, which mine awhile her made ;
Mine to be his, with him to live for aye. 236
O that so fair a flowre so soon should fade,
And through untimely tempest fall away !

“ She fell away in her first age's spring, 239
Whilst yet her leaf was green, and fresh her rind,
And whilst her branch fair blossoms forth did
bring,
She fell away against all course of kind.
For age to die is right, but youth is wrong ;
She fell away like fruit blown down with wind. 244
Weep, Shepherd ! weep, to make my undersong.

II.

“ What heart so stony hard but that would weep,
And pour forth fountains of incessant tears ?
What Timon but would let compassion creep
Into his breast, and pierce his frozen ears ?
In stead of tears, whose brackish bitter well 250
I wasted have, my heart-blood drooping wears,
To think to ground how that fair blossom fell.

“ Yet fell she not as one enforc'd to die,
Ne died with dread and grudging discontent,
But as one toil'd with travel down doth lie, 255
So lay she down, as if to sleep she went,
And clos'd her eyes with careless quietness ;
The whiles soft Death away her spirit hent,
And soul assoyl'd from sinful fleshliness.

“ Yet ere that life her lodging did forsake, 260
She, all resolv'd, and ready to remove,
Calling to me (ay me !) this wise bespake ;
Alcyon ! ah, my first and latest love !
Ah ! why does my Alcyon weep and mourn,
And grieve my ghost, that ill mote him behove,
As if to me had chanst some evil tourn. 266

“ I, sith the messenger is come for me,
That summons souls unto the bridale feast
Of his great Lord, must needs depart from thee,
And straight obey his sovereign behest ; 270
Why should Alcyon then so sore lament
That I from misery should be releast,
And freed from wretched long imprisonment ?

“ Our days are full of dolour and disease,
 Our life afflicted with incessant pain, 275
 That nought on earth may lessen or appease ;
 Why then should I desire here to remain ?
 Or why should he that loves me sorry be
 For my deliverance, or at all complain
 My good to hear, and toward joys to see ? 280

“ I go, and long desired have to go,
 I go with gladness to my wished rest,
 Whereas no world’s sad care nor wasting woe
 May come, their happy quiet to molest ;
 But saints and angels in celestial thrones 235
 Eternally him praise that hath them blest ;
 There shall I be amongst those blessed ones.

“ Yet ere I go, a pledge I leave with thee
 Of the late love the which betwixt us past,
 My young Ambrosia ; in lieu of me 290
 Love her, so shall our love for ever last.
 Thus, Dear ! adieu, whom I expect ere long.
 So having said, away she softly past.
 Weep, Shepherd ! weep, to make mine undersong.

III.

“ So oft as I record those piercing words, 295
 Which yet are deep engraven in my brest,
 And those last deadly accents, which like swords
 Did wound my heart, and rend my bleeding chest,
 With those sweet sugred speeches do compare,
 The which my soul first conquer’d and possest, 300
 The first beginners of my endless care :

“ And when those pallid cheeks and ashie hue,
In which sad Death his portraiture had writ,
And when those hollow eyes and deadly view,
On which the cloud of ghastly Night did sit, 305
I match with that sweet smile and chearful brow.
Which all the world subdued unto it,
How happy was I then, and wretched now ?

“ How happy was I when I saw her lead
The Shepherds’ daughters dauncing in a round ?
How trimly would she trace and softly tread 311
The tender grass, with rosie garland crown’d ?
And when she list advaunce her heavenly voice,
Both nymphs and Muses nigh she made astown’d,
And flocks and shepherds caused to rejoyce. 315

“ But now, ye shepherd Lasses ! who shall lead
Your wandring troupes, or sing your virelayes ?
Or who shall dight your bowres, sith she is dead
That was the lady of your holy-days ?
Let now your bliss be turned into bale, 320
And into plaints convert your joyous plays,
And with the same fill every hill and dale.

“ Let bagpipe never more be heard to shrill,
That may allure the senses to delight,
Ne’ ever shepherd sound his oaten quill 325
Unto the many that provoke them might
To idle pleasance, but let ghastliness
And dreary horror dim the chearful light,
To make the image of true heaviness ;

“ Let birds be silent on the naked spray, 330
 And shady woods resound with dreadfull yells ;
 Let streaming floods their hasty courses stay,
 And parching drouth dry up the crystal wells ;
 Let th’ earth be barren, and bring forth no flowres,
 And the air be fill’d with noise of doleful knells,
 And wandering spirits walk untimely houres. 336

“ And Nature, nurse of every living thing,
 Let rest herself from her long weariness,
 And cease henceforth things kindly forth to bring,
 But hideous monsters full of ugliness ; 340
 For she it is that hath me done this wrong,
 No nurse, but stepdame, cruel, merciless.
 Weep, Shepherd ! weep, to make my undersong.

IV.

“ My little flock, whom earst I lov’d so well,
 And wont to feed with finest grass that grew, 345
 Feed ye henceforth on bitter astofell,
 And stinking smallage, and unsavory rue ;
 And when your maws are with those weeds corrupted,
 Be ye the prey of wolves ; ne will I rue
 That with your carkasses wild beasts be glutted.

“ Ne worse to you, my silly Sheep ! I pray, 351
 Ne sorer vengeance wish on you to fall
 Than to my self, for whose confus’d decay
 To careless Heavens I do daily call ;
 But Heavens refuse to hear a wretch’s cry, 355
 And cruel Death doth scorn to come at call,
 Or grant this boon that most desires to die.

“ The good and righteous he away doth take,
To plague th’ unrighteous which alive remain,
But the ungodly ones he doth forsake, 360
By living long to multiply their pain ;
Else surely death should be no punishment,
As the great Judge at first did it ordain,
But rather riddance from long languishment.

“ Therefore, my Daphne, they have tane away, 365
For worthy of a better place was she,
But me unworthy willed here to stay,
That with her lack I might tormented be.
Sith then they so have ordred, I will pay
Penance to her, according their decree, 370
And to her ghost do service day by day.

“ For I will walk this wandering pilgrimage,
Throughout the world from one to other end,
And in affliction waste my bitter age :
My bread shall be the anguish of my mind, 375
My drink the tears which from mine eyes do rain,
My bed the ground that hardest I may find ;
So will I wilfully increase my pain.

“ And she, my love that was, my saint that is,
When she beholds from her celestial throne 380
(In which she joyeth in eternal bliss)
My bitter penance, will my case bemone,
And pity me that living thus to die ;
For heavenly spirits have compassion
On mortal men, and rue their misery. 385

“ So when I have with sorrow satisfide
 Th’ importune Fates, which vengeance on me seek,
 And th’ Heavens with long languor pacifide,
 She for pure pity of my sufferance meek,
 Will send for me, for which I daily long, 390
 And will till then my painful penance eke.
 Weep, Shepherd ! weep, to make my undersong.

v.

“ Henceforth I hate whatever Nature made,
 And in her workmanship no pleasure find,
 For they be all but vain, and quickly fade ; 395
 So soon as on them blows the northern wind,
 They tarry not, but flit and fall away,
 Leaving behind them nought but grief of mind,
 And mocking such as think they long will stay.

“ I hate the Heaven, because it doth with-hold 400
 Me from my love, and eke my love from me ;
 I hate the earth, because it is the mould
 Of fleshly slime and frail mortality ;
 I hate the fire, because to nought it flies ;
 I hate the air, because sighs of it be ; 405
 I hate the sea, because it tears supplies.

“ I hate the day, because it lendeth light
 To see all things, and not my love to see ;
 I hate the darkness and the dreary night,
 Because they breed sad balefulness in me ; 410
 I hate all times, because, all times do fly
 So fast away, and may not stayed be,
 But as a speedy post that passeth by.

“ I hate to speak, my voice is spent with crying ;
I hate to hear, loud complaints have dull'd mine ears ;
I hate to taste, for food with-holds my dying ; 416
I hate to see, mine eyes are dimm'd with tears ;
I hate to smell, no sweet on earth is left ;
I hate to feel, my flesh is numb'd with fears :
So all my senses from me are bereft. 420

“ I hate all men, and shun all womankind ;
The one, because as I they wretched are ;
The other, for because I do not find
My love with them, that wont to be their star :
And life I hate, because it will not last ; 425
And death I hate, because it life doth mar ;
And all I hate that is to come or past.

“ So all the world, and all in it I hate,
Because it changeth ever to and fro,
And never standeth in one certain state, 430
But still unstedfast, round about doth go
Like a mill-wheel in midst of misery,
Driven with streams of wretchedness and woe,
That dying lives, and living still does die.

“ So do I live, so do I daily die, 435
And pine away in self-consuming pain ;
Sith she that did my vital powers supply,
And feeble spirits in their force maintain,
Is fetcht from me, why seek I to prolong
My weary days in dolour and disdain ? 440
Weep, Shepherd ! weep, to make my undersong.

VI.

“ Why do I longer live in life’s despight,
And do not die then in despight of death ;
Why do I longer see this loathsom light
And do in darkness not abridge my breath, 445
Sith all my sorrow should have end thereby,
And cares find quiet ? is it so uncaith
To leave this life, or dolorous to die ?

“ To live I find it deadly dolorous,
For life draws care, and care continual woe ; 450
Therefore to die must needs be joyeous,
And wishful thing this sad life to forgoe :
But I must stay ; I may it not amend,
My Daphne hence departing bade me so ;
She bade me stay till she for me did send. 455

“ Yet whilst I in this wretched vale do stay,
My weary feet shall ever wandring be,
That still I may be ready on my way
When as her messenger doth come for me ;
Ne will I rest my feet for feebleness, 460
Ne will I rest my limbs for fraelty,
Ne will I rest mine eyes for heaviness.

“ But as the mother of the gods, that sought
For fair Euridyce, her daughter dear,
Throughout the world, with woful heavy thought,
So will I travel whilst I tarry here, 466
Ne will I lodge, ne will I ever lin,
Ne when as drouping Titan draweth near,
To loose his teem, will I take up my inn.

“ Ne sleep (the harbinger of weary wights) 470
 Shall ever lodge upon mine eye-lids more ;
 Ne shall with rest refresh my fainting sprights,
 Nor failing force to former strength restore :
 But I will wake and sorrow all the night
 With Philomel my fortune to deplore ; 475
 With Philomel, the partner of my plight.

“ And ever as I see the star to fall,
 And under ground to go to give them light
 Which dwell in darkness, I to mind will call
 How my fair star (that shin’d on me so bright) 480
 Fell suddainly and faded under-ground,
 Since whose departure day is turn’d to night,
 And night without a Venus’ star is found.

“ But as soon as Day doth shew his dewie face,
 And calls forth men unto their toylsom trade, 485
 I will withdraw me to some darksom place,
 Or some dear cave, or solitary shade ;
 There will I sigh, and sorrow all day long,
 And the huge burden of my cares unlade.
 Weep Shepherd ! weep, to make my undersong. 490

VII.

“ Henceforth mine eyes shall never more behold
 Fair things on earth, ne feed on false delight
 Of ought that framed is of mortal mould,
 Sith that my fairest flower is faded quight ;
 For all I see is vain and transitory, 495
 Ne will be held in any stedfast plight,
 But in a moment lose their grace and glory.

“ And ye, fond Men! on Fortune’s wheel that ride,
Or in ought under heaven repose assurance,
Be it riches, beauty, or honour’s pride, 500
Be sure that they shall have no long endurance,
But ere ye be aware will flit away;
For nought of them is yours, but th’only usance
Of a small time, which none ascertain may.

“ And ye, true Lovers! whom desastrous chaunce
Hath far exiled from your ladies grace, 506
To mourn in sorrow and sad sufferaunce,
When ye do hear me in that desert place
Lamenting loud my Daphne’s elegy,
Help me to wail my miserable case, 510
And when life parts vouchsafe to close mine eye.

“ And ye, more happy Lovers! which enjoy
The presence of your dearest love’s delight,
When ye do hear my sorrowful annoy,
Yet pity me in your empassion’d spright, 515
And think that such mishap, as chaunst to me,
May happen unto the most happy wight,
For all mens states alike unstedfast be.

“ And ye, my fellow Shepherds! which do feed
Your careless flocks on hills and open plains, 520
With better fortune than did me succeed,
Remember yet my undeserved pains;
And when ye hear that I am dead or slain,
Lament my lot, and tell your fellow-swains
That sad Alcyon dy’d in life’s disdain. 525

“ And ye, fair Damsels ! shepherds’ dear delights,
That with your loves do their rude hearts possess,
Whenas my hearse shall happen to your sights,
Vouchsafe to deck the same with cyparess ;
And ever sprinkle brackish tears among, 530
In pity of my undeserv’d distress,
The which I, wretch, endured have thus long.

“ And ye, poor Pilgrims ! that with restless toyl
Weary yourselves in wandring desart ways,
Till that you come where ye your vows assoil, 535
When passing by ye read these woful lays
On my grave written, rue my Daphne’s wrong,
And mourn for me that languish out my days.
Cease, Shepherd ! cease, and end thy undersong.”

Thus when he ended had his heavy plaint, 540
The heaviest plaint that ever I heard sound,
His cheeks wext pale, and sprights began to faint,
As if again he would have fall’n to ground ;
Which when I saw, (I stepping to him light)
Amooved him out of his stony swound, 545
And ’gan him to recomfort as I might.

But he no way recomforted would be,
Nor suffer solace to approach him nie,
But casting up a sdeignful eye at me,
That in his traunce I would not let him lie, 550
Did rend his hair, and beat his blubbred face,
As one disposed wilfully to die,
That I sore griev’d to see his wretched case.

Tho when the pang was somewhat over-past,
And the outrageous passion nigh appeased, 555
I him desir'd, sith day was over-cast,
And dark night fast approached, to be pleased
To turn aside unto my cabinet,
And stay with me till he were better eased
Of that strong stound which him so sore beset. 560

But by no means I could him win thereto,
Ne longer him intreat with me to stay,
But without taking leave he forth did go
With staggring pace and dismal looks' dismay,
As if that Death he in the face had seen, 565
Or hellish hags had met upon the way ;
But what of him became I cannot ween. 567

A S T R O P H E L :

A PASTORAL ELEGY

Upon the death of the most noble and valorous knight,

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

Dedicated to the most beautiful and vertuous lady,

THE COUNTESS OF ESSEX.

SHEPHERDS ! that wont on pipes of oaten reed
Oft-times to plain your loves concealed smart,
And with your piteous lays have learn'd to breed
Compassion in a country lass's heart,
Hearken, ye gentle Shepherds! to my song,
And place my doleful plaint your plaints emong.

To you alone I sing this mournful verse,
The mournful'st verse that ever man heard tell;
To you whose softned hearts it may empierce
With Dolour's dart, for death of Astrophel;
To you I sing, and to none other wight,
For well I wote my rymes been rudely dight.

Yet as they been, if any nicer wit
Shall hap to hear, or covet them to read,
Think he that such are for such ones most fit,
Made not to please the living but the dead;
And if in him found pity ever place,
Let him be mov'd to pity such a case.

ASTROPHEL

A GENTLE shepherd, born in Arcady,
Of gentlest race that ever shepherd bore,
About the grassy banks of Hæmony
Did keep his sheep, his little stock and store :
Full carefully he kept them day and night 5
In fairest fields, and Astrophel he hight.

Young Astrophel! the pride of shepherds' praise,
Young Astrophel! the rustick lasses love,
Far passing all the pastors of his days,
In all that seemly shepherds might behove ; 10
In one thing only failing of the best,
That he was not so happy as the rest.

For from the time that first the nymph his mother
Him forth did bring, and taught her lambs to feed,
A slender swain, excelling far each other 15
In comely shape, like her that did him breed,
He grew up fast in goodness and in grace,
And doubly fair wox both in mind and face ;

Which daily more and more he did augment
With gentle usage and demeanure mild, 20
That all mens hearts with secret ravishment
He stole away, and weetingly beguil'd :
Ne Spight it self, that all good things doth spill,
Found out in him that she could say was ill.

His sports were fair, his joyance innocent, 25
Sweet without sowre, and honey without gall ;
And he himself seem'd made for merriment,
Merrily masking both in bower and hall :
There was no pleasure nor delightful play
When Astrophel so-ever was away. 30

For he could pipe and dance, and carol sweet
Emongst the shepherds in their shearing feast,
As sommer's lark, that with her song doth greet
The dawning day, forth coming from the east ;
And layes of love he also could compose ; 35
Thrice happy she whom he to praise did chose.

Full many maidens often did him woo
Them to vouchsafe emongst his rimes to name,
Or make for them, as he was wont to do
For her that did his heart with love inflame ; 40
For which they promised to dight for him
Gay chapelets of flowers and girlonds trim.

And many a nymph, both of the wood and brook,
Soon as his oaten pipe began to shrill,

Both crystal wells and shady groves forsook, 45
To hear the charms of his enchanting skill,
And brought him presents, flowers if it were prime,
Or mellow-fruit, if it were harvest-time.

But he for none of them did care a whit,
Yet wood-gods for them often sighed sore ; 50
Ne for their gifts, unworthy of his wit,
Yet not unworthy of the country's store :
For one alone he car'd, for one he sigh'd,
His life's desire, and his dear love's delight.

Stella the fair ! the fairest star in sky, 55
As fair as Venus, or the fairest fair,
(A fairer star saw never living eye)
Shot her sharp-pointed beams through purest air :
Her he did love, her he alone did honour,
His thoughts, his rimes, his songs, were all upon her.

To her he vow'd the service of his days, 61
On her he spent the riches of his wit,
For her he made hymns of immortal praise,
Of only her he sung, he thought, he writ :
Her, and but her, of love he worthy deemed, 65
For all the rest but little he esteemed.

Ne her with idle words alone he wooed,
And verses vain, (yet verses are not vain)
But with brave deeds to her sole service vowed,
And bold atchievements her did entertain ; 70

For both in deeds and words he nourtred was,
Both wise and hardy, (too hardy, alas!)

In wrestling nimble, and in running swift ;
In shooting stedly, and in swimming strong :
Well made to strike, to throw, to leap, to lift, 75
And all the sports that shepherds are emong.
In every one he vanquisht every one,
He vanquisht all, and vanquisht was of none.

Besides, in hunting such felic y,
Or rather infelicity, he found, 80
That every field and forest far away
He sought, where salvage beasts do most abound :
No beast so salvage but he could it kill,
No chace so hard but he therein had skill.

Such skill, matcht with such courage as he had, 85
Did prick him forth with proud desire of praise
To seek abroad, of danger nought ydrad,
His mistress' name and his own fame to raise.
What needeth peril to be sought abroad,
Sith round about us it doth make abroad ? 90

It fortun'd as he that perilous game
In forein soil pursued far away,
Into a forest wide and waste he came,
Where store he herd to be of salvage prey :
So wide a forest, and so waste as this, 95
Nor famous Ardeyn nor foul Arlo is.

There his well-woven toyls and subtil trains
He laid, the brutish nation to enwrap ;
So well he wrought with practice and with pains,
That he of them great troupes did soon entrap : 100
Full happy man (misweening much) was he,
So rich a spoyl within his power to see.

Eftsoones all heedless of his dearest hale,
Full greedily into the herd he thrust,
To slaughter them, and work their final bale, 105
Lest that his toyl should of their troupes be burst.
Wide wounds emongst them many a one he made,
Now with his sharp-boar spear, now with his blade.

His care was all how he them all might kill,
That none might scape (so partial unto none) 110
Ill mind, so much to mind another's ill,
As to become unmindful of his own :
But pardon unto the cruel skyes,
That from himself to them withdrew his eyes.

So as he rag'd emongst that beastly rout, 115
A cruel beast of most accursed brood,
Upon him turn'd (despair makes cowards stout)
And with fell tooth, accustomed to blood,
Launced his thigh with so mischievous might,
That it both bone and muscles rived quight. 120

So deadly was the dint, and deep the wound,
And so huge streams of blood thereat did flow,

That he endured not the direful stound,
But on the cold dear earth himself did throw ;
The whiles the captive herd his nets did rend, 125
And having none to lett, to wood did wend.

Ah! where were ye this while, his shepherd peers,
To whom alive was nought so dear as he ?
And ye, fair Maids! the matches of his years,
Which in his grace did boast you most to be ? 130
Ah! where were ye, when he of you had need
To stop his wound, that wondrously did bleed ?

Ah! wretched Boy! the shape of Dreryhead,
And sad example of man's sudden end,
Full little faileth but thou shalt be dead, 135
Unpitied, unplain'd, or foe or friend ;
Whilst none is nigh thine eye-lids up to close,
And kiss thy lips like faded leaves of rose.

A sort of shepherds suing of the chace,
As they the forest ranged on a day, 140
By Fate or Fortune came unto the place,
Whereas the luckless boy yet bleeding lay ;
Yet bleeding lay, and yet would still have bled,
Had not good hap those shepherds thither led.

They stopt his wound (too late to stop it was) 145
And in their arms then softly did him rear ;
Tho (as he will'd) unto his loved lass,
His dearest love, him dolefully did bear :

The dolefulst bier that ever man did see
Was Astrophel, but dearest unto me. 150

She, when she saw her love in such a plight,
With crudled blood and filthy gore deformed,
That wont to be with flowers and girlonds dight,
And her dear favours dearly well adorned,
Her face the fairest face that eye mote see, 155
She likewise did deform, like him to be.

Her yellow locks, that shone so bright and long,
As sunny beams in fairest summer's day,
She fiercely tore, and with outrageous wrong
From her red cheeks the roses rent away; 160
And her fair brest, the treasury of joy,
She spoyl'd thereof, and filled with annoy.

His pallid face, impictured with death,
She bathed oft with tears, and dried oft; 164
And with sweet kisses suck'd the wasting breath
Out of his lips, like lillies, pale and soft;
And oft she call'd to him, who answer'd nought,
But only by his looks did tell his thought.

The rest of her impatient regret 169
And piteous mone the which she for him made,
No tongue can tell, nor any forth can set,
But he whose heart like sorrow did invade.
At last, when pain his vital powers had spent,
His wasted life her weary lodge forwent.

Which when she saw, she staid not a whit, 175
But after him did make untimely haste;
Forth-with her ghost out of her corps did flit,
And followed her mate, like turtle chaste,
To prove that death their hearts cannot divide,
Which living were in love so firmly tide. 180

The gods, which all things see, this same beheld,
And pitying this pair of lovers true,
Transformed them there lying on the field,
Into one flowre, that is both red and blue:
It first grows red, and then to blue doth fade, 185
Like Astrophel, which thereinto was made.

And in the midst thereof a star appears,
As fairly form'd as any star in skyes,
Resembling Stella in her freshest years,
Forth darting beams of beauty from her eyes; 190
And all the day it standeth full of dew,
Which is the tears that from her eyes did flow.

That herb of some Starlight is call'd by name,
Of others Penthia, though not so well;
But thou, where-ever thou dost find the same, 195
From this day forth do call it Astrophel;
And whensoever thou it up doost take,
Do pluck it softly, for that shepherd's sake.

Hereof when tydings far abroad did pass,
The shepherds all, which loved him full dear, 200

(And sure full dear of all he loved was)
Did thither flock, to see what they did hear ;
And when that piteous spectacle they viewed,
The same with bitter tears they all bedewed.

And every one did make exceeding mone, 205
With inward anguish, and great grief opprest ;
And every one did weep, and wail, and mone,
And means devis'd to shew his sorrow best ;
That from that howre, since first on grassie green
Shepherds kept sheep, was not like mourning seen.

But first his sister, that Clarinda hight, 211
That gentlest shepherdess that lives this day,
And most resembling both in shape and spright,
Her brother dear, began this doleful lay ;
Which, lest I mar the sweetness of the verse, 215
In sort as she it sung I will rehearse.

“ Aye me ! to whom shall I, my case complain,
That may compassion my impatient grief ?
Or where shall I unfold my inward pain,
That my enriven heart may find relief ? 220
Shall I unto the heavenly powres it show ?
Or unto earthly men that dwell below ?

“ To heavens ? ah ! they, alas ! the authors were,
And workers, of my unremedied wo ;
For they foresee what to us happens here, 225
And they foresaw, yet suffred this be so.

From them comes good, from them comes also ill :
That which they made, who can them warn to spill ?

“ To men ? ah ! they, alas ! like wretched be,
And subject to the Heavens’ ordinance, 230
Bound to abide whatever they decree ;
Their best redress is their best sufferance.
How then can they, like wretched, comfort me,
The which no less need comforted to be ?

“ Then to my self will I my sorrow mourn, 235
Sith none alive like sorrowful remains,
And to my self my complaints shall back retourn,
To pay their usury with double pains :
The woods, the hills, the rivers, shall resound
The mournful accent of my sorrows’ ground. 240

“ Woods, hills, and rivers, now are desolate,
Sith he is gone the which them all did grace ;
And all the fields do wail their widow state,
Sith death their fairest flower did late deface :
The fairest flowre in field that ever grew 245
Was Astrophel ; that was we all may rue.

“ What cruel hand of cursed foe unknown
Hath cropt the stalk which bore so fair a flowre ?
Untimely cropt, before it well were grown,
And clean defaced in untimely howre : 250
Great loss to all that ever him did see,
Great loss to all, but greatest loss to me.

“ Break now your girlonds, O ye shepherds Lasses!
Sith the fair flowre which them adorn’d is gone ;
The flowre which them adorn’d, is gone to ashes,
Never again let lass put girlond on :
In stead of girlond, wear sad cypress now,
And bitter elder, broken from the bough.

“ Ne ever sing the love-lays which he made ;
Who ever made such lays of love as he ? 260
Ne ever read the riddles which he said
Unto your selves, to make you merry glee :
Your merry glee is now laid all abed,
Your merry maker now, alas ! is dead.

“ Death, the devourer of all world’s delight, 265
Hath robbed you, and reft fro me my joy ;
Both you and me, and all the world, he quight,
Hath robb’d of joyance, and left sad annoy.
Joy of the world, and shepherds’ pride was he ;
Shepherds, hope never like again to see. 270

“ O Death ! that hast us of such riches reft,
Tell us, at least, what hast thou with it done ?
What is become of him whose flowre here left
Is but the shadow of his likeness gone ?
Scarce like the shadow of that which he was, 275
Nought like, but that he like a shade did pass.

“ But that immortal spirit, which was deckt
With all the dowries of celestial grace,

By sovereign choice from th' heavenly quires select,
And lineally deriv'd from angels' race, 280
O what is now of it become? aread:
Aye me! can so divine a thing be dead:

“ Ah! no: it is not dead, ne can it die,
But lives for aye in blissful paradise,
Where like a new-born babe it soft doth lie 285
In bed of lillies, wrapt in tender wise,
And compast all about with roses sweet,
And dainty violets from head to feet.

“ There thousand birds, all of celestial brood,
To him do sweetly carol day and night, 290
And with strange notes, of him well understood,
Lull him asleep in angel-like delight;
Whilst in sweet dream to him presented be
Immortal beauties, which no eye may see.

“ But he them sees, and takes exceeding pleasure
Of their divine aspects, appearing plain, 295
And kindling love in him above all measure;
Sweet love, still joyous, never feeling pain:
For what so goodly form he there doth see
He may enjoy, from jealous rancor free. 300

“ There liveth he in everlasting bliss,
Sweet Spirit! never fearing more to die,
Ne dreading harm from any foes of his,
Ne fearing savage beasts' more cruelty,

Whilst we here wretches wail his private lack, 305
And with vain vows do often call him back.

“ But live thou there still, happy, happy Spirit !
And give us leave thee here thus to lament ;
Not thee that dost thy heaven’s joy inherit,
But our own selves, that here in dole are drent. 310
Thus do we weep and wail, and wear our eyes,
Mourning in others our own miseries.”

Which when she ended had, another swain,
Of gentle wit and dainty sweet device,
Whom Astrophel full dear did entertain 315
Whilst here he liv’d, and held in passing price,
Hight Thestylis, began his mournful tour,
And made the Muses in his song to mourn.

And after him full many other moe,
And every one in order lov’d him best, 320
’Gan dight themselves t’ express their inward woe
With doleful layes, unto the time addrest ;
The which I here in order will rehearse,
As fittest flowres to deck his mournful hearse. 324

THE MOURNING MUSE.

OF THESTYLIS.

COME forth, ye Nymphs ! come forth,
Forsake your watry bowres,
Forsake your mossy caves,
And help me to lament ;
Help me to tune my doleful notes 5
To gurgling sound
Of Liffie's tumbling streams :
Come let salt tears of ours
Mix with his waters fresh :
O come ! let one consent 10
Joyn us to mourn with wailful plaints
The deadly wound
Which fatal clap hath made,
Decreed by higher powres ;
The drery day in which 15
They have from us yrent
The noblest plant that might
From east to west be found.
Mourn, mourn great Philip's fall !
Mourn, we his woful end, 20
Whom spiteful Death hath pluckt
Untimely from the tree,

Whiles yet his years in flowre
Did promise worthy fruit.
Ah ! dreadful Mars ! why didst 25
Thou not thy knight defend ?
What wrathful mood, what fault
Of ours hath moved thee
Of such a shining light
To leave us destitute ? 30
Thou with benigne aspect
Sometime didst us behold ;
Thou hast in Briton's valour
Ta'en delight of old,
And with thy presence oft 35
Vouchsaft to attribute
Fame and renown to us
For glorious martial deeds ;
But now thy ireful beams
Have chill'd our hearts with cold ; 40
Thou hast estrang'd thy self,
And deignest not our land :
Far off, to others now
Thy favour honour breeds,
And high disdain doth cause 45
Thee shun our clime, I fear ;
For hadst thou not been wroth,
Or that time near at hand,
Thou wouldst have heard the cry
That woful England made ; 50
Eke Zealand's piteous plaints,
And Holland's toren hair,

Would haply have appeas'd
Thy divine angry mind.

Thou shouldst have seen the trees 55

Refuse to yield their shade,

And wailing, to let fall

The honours of their head ;

And birds in mournful tunes

Lamenting in their kind. 60

Up from his tomb

The mighty Corineus rose,

Who cursing oft the Fates,

That his mishap had bred,

His hoary locks he tare, 65

Calling the Heavens unkind.

The Thames was heard to roar,

The Reyne and eke the Mose,

The Schald, the Danow' self

'This great mischance did rue 70

With torment and with grief ;

Their fountains pure and clear

Were troubled, and with swelling floods

Declar'd their woes.

The Muses comfortless, 75

The Nymphs with pallid hue,

The sylvan gods likewise

Came running far and near,

And all with tears bedew'd, 80

And eyes cast up on high,

O help ! O help ! ye Gods !

They ghastly 'gan to cry ;

O change the cruel fate
Of this so rare a wight,
And grant that Nature's course 85
May measure out his age.
The beasts their food forsook,
And trembling fearfully,
Each sought his cave or den,
This cry did them so fright. 90
Out from amid the waves,
By storm then stir'd to rage,
This cry did cause to rise
Th' old Father Ocean hoar,
Who, grave with eld, and full 95
Of majesty in sight,
Spake in this wise; "Refrain,"
Quoth he, "your tears and plaints;
"Cease these your idle words;
"Make vain requests no more; 100
"No humble speech nor mone
"May move the fixed stint
"Of Destiny or Death:
"Such is his will that paints
"The earth with colours fresh, 105
"The darkest skyes with store
"Of starry lights; and though
"Your tears a heart of flint
"Might tender make, yet nought
"Herein they will prevail." 110
Whiles thus he said,
The noble knight, who 'gan to feel

His vital force to faint,
 And Death with cruel dint
 Of direful dart 115
 His mortal body to assail,
 With eyes lift up to heav'n,
 And courage frank as steel,
 With chearful face,
 Where valour lively was exprest, 120
 But humble mind, he said,
 " O Lord ! if ought this frail
 " And earthly carcass have
 " Thy service sought t' advance ;
 " If my desire hath been 125
 " Still to relieve th' opprest ;
 " If justice to maintain,
 " That valour I have spent
 " Which thou me gav'st ; or if
 " Henceforth I might advance 130
 " Thy name, thy truth, then spare
 " Me (Lord!) if thou think best ;
 " Forbear these unripe years :
 " But if thy will be bent,
 " If that prefixed time 135
 " Be come which thou hast set,
 " Through pure and fervent faith
 " I hope now to be plac'd
 " In the everlasting bliss
 " Which with thy precious blood 140
 " Thou purchase did for us."
 With that a sigh he fet,

And straight a cloudy mist
His senses over-cast ;
His lips wax pale and wan, 145
Like damask roses' bud
Cast from the stalk, or like
In field to purple flowre,
Which languisheth, being shred
By culter as it past. 150
A trembling chilly cold
Ran through their veins, which were
With eyes brim-full of tears
To see his fatal howre,
Whose blustering sighs at first 155
Their sorrow did declare,
Next murmuring ensude :
At last they not forbear
Plain out-cries, all against
The Heav'ns, that enviously 160
Depriv'd us of a spright
So perfect and so rare.
The sun his lightsom beams
Did shroud, and hide his face
For grief, whereby the earth 165
Fear'd night eternally :
The mountains each were shook ;
The rivers turn'd their streams ;
And th' air 'gan, winter-like,
To rage and fret apace ; 170
And grisly ghosts by night
Were seen, and fiery gleams

Amid the clouds, with claps
 Of thunder, that did seem
 To rent the skies, and made 175
 Both men and beast afeard.
 The birds of ill presage
 This luckless chance fore-told
 By dearnful noise, and dogs
 With howling made men deem 180
 Some mischief was at hand;
 For such they do esteem
 As tokens of mishap,
 And so have done of old.
 Ah! that thou hadst but heard 185
 His lovely Stella 'plain
 Her grievous loss, or seen
 Her heavy mourning cheer,
 While she with woe opprest
 Her sorrows did unfold : 190
 Her hair hung loose neglect
 About her shoulders twain;
 And from those two bright stars,
 To him sometime so deer,
 Her heart sent drops of pearl, 195
 Which fell in foyson down
 Twixt lilly and the rose:
 She wrong her hands with pain,
 And piteously 'gan say,
 " My true and faithfull Pheer, 200
 " Alas and woe is me!
 " Why should my fortune frown

- “ On me shus frowardly,
“ To rob me of my joy?
“ What cruell envious hand 205
“ Hath taken thee away,
“ And with thee my content,
“ My comfort and my stay?
“ Thou only wast the ease
“ Of trouble and annoy; 210
“ When they did me assail,
“ In thee my hopes did rest.
“ Alas! what now is left
“ But grief, that night and day
“ Afflicts this woful life, 215
“ And with continual rage
“ Torments ten thousand ways
“ My miserable brest?
“ O greedy, envious Heaven!
“ What needeth thee to have 220
“ Enrich’d with such a jewel
“ This unhappy age,
“ To take it back again
“ So soon? Alas! when shall
“ Mine eyes see ought that may 225
“ Content them, since the grave
“ My only treasure hides,
“ The joys of my poor heart?
“ As here with thee on earth
“ I liv’d ev’n so equal, 230
“ Methinks it were with thee
“ In heav’n I did abide;

“ And as our troubles all
“ We here on earth did part,
“ So reason would that there 235
“ Of thy most happy state
“ I had my share. Alas!
“ If thou my trusty guide
“ Were wont to be, how canst
“ Thou leave me thus alone 240
“ In darkness, and astray?
“ Weak, weary, desolate,
“ Plung’d in a world of woe,
“ Refusing for to take
“ Me with thee to the place 245
“ Of rest where thou art gone.”
This said, she held her peace,
For sorrow tide her tongue,
And instead of more words,
Seem’d that her eyes a lake 250
Of tears had been, they flow’d
So plenteously therefro;
And with her sobs and sighs
Th’air round about her rung.
If Venus, when she wail’d 255
Her dear Adonis slain,
Ought mov’d in thy fierce heart
Compassion of her woe,
His noble sister’s plaints
Her sighs and tears emong, 260
Would sure have made thee mild,
And inly rue her pain.

Aurora half so fair
 Herself did never show,
 When from old Tithon's bed 265
 She weeping did arise.
 The blinded Archer-boy,
 Like lark in showre of rain,
 Sate bathing of his wings,
 And, glad, the time did spend 270
 Under those chrystal drops
 Which fell from her fair eyes,
 And at their brightest beams
 Him proyn'd in lovely wise :
 Yet sorry for her grief, 275
 Which he could not amend,
 The gentle boy 'gan wipe
 Her eyes, and clear those lights,
 Those lights through which
 His glory and his conquests shine. 280
 The Graces tuckt her hair,
 Which hung like threds of gold
 Along her ivory brest,
 The treasure of delights.
 All things with her to weep 285
 It seemed did incline ;
 The trees, the hills, the dales,
 The caves, the stones so cold ;
 The air did help them mourn,
 With dark clouds, rain and mist, 290
 Forbearing many a day
 To clear itself again,

Which made them eftsoons fear
 The days of Pyrrah should
 Of creatures spoil the earth, 295
 Their fatal threds untwist ;
 For Phœbus' gladsome rays
 Were wished for in vain ;
 And with her quivering light
 Latona's daughter fair, 300
 And Charles-Wain eke, refus'd
 To be the shipman's guide.
 On Neptune war was made
 By Æolus and his train,
 Who letting loose the winds, 305
 Tost and tormented th' air ;
 So that on ev'ry coast
 Men shipwrack did abide,
 Or else were swallow'd up
 In open sea with waves ; 310
 And such as came to shore,
 Were beaten with despair.
 The Medway's silver streams,
 That wont so still to slide,
 Were troubled now and wroth, 315
 Whose hidden hollow caves
 Along his banks, with fog
 Then shrouded from man's eye,
 Ay Philip ! did resound,
 Ay Philip ! they did cry. 320
 His nymphs were seen no more,
 (Though custom still it craves)

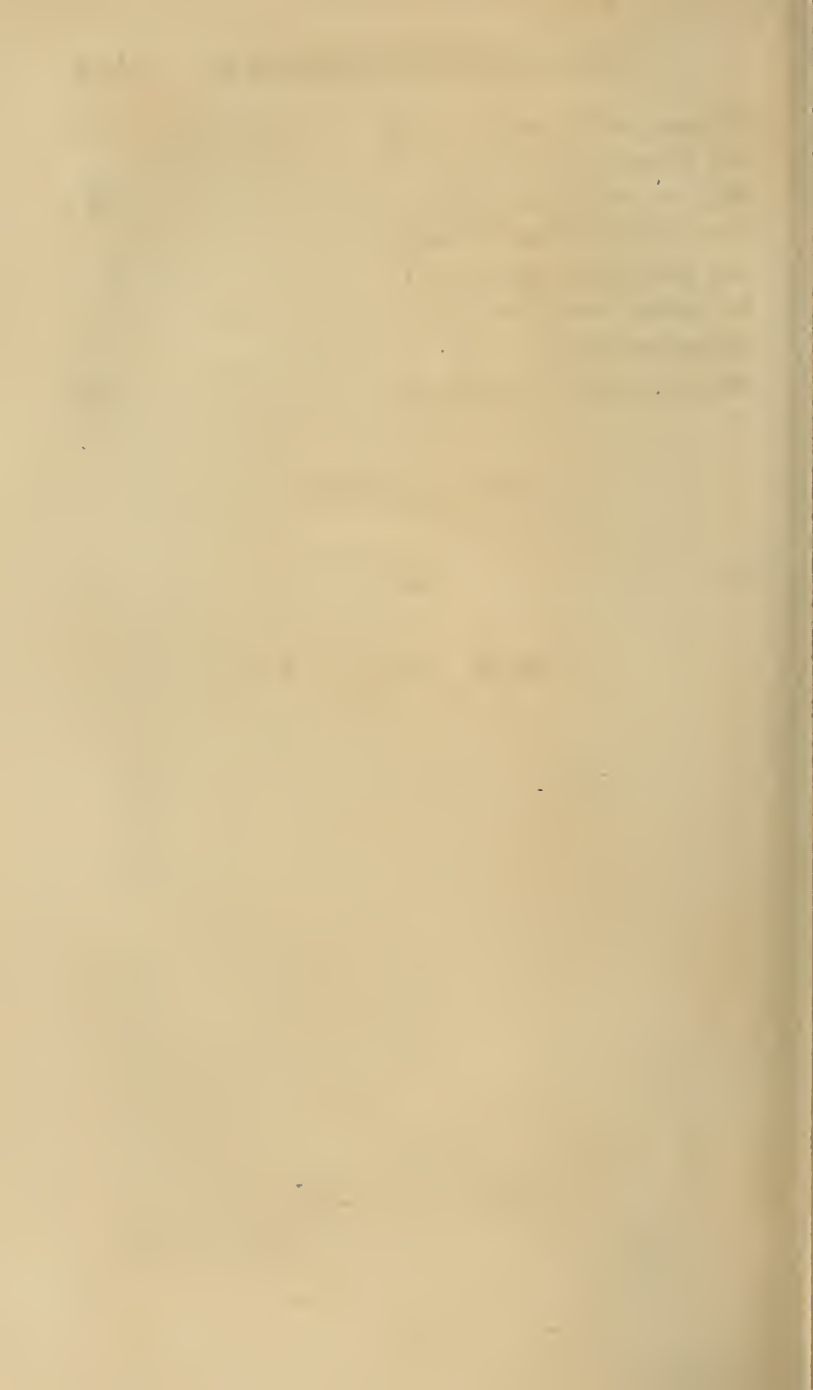
With hair spread to the wind,
 Themselves to bathe or sport,
 Or with the hook or net, 325
 Bare-footed, wantonly
 The pleasant dainty fish
 To entangle or deceive.
 The shepherds left
 Their wonted places of resort, 330
 Their bagpipes now were still ;
 Their loving merry lays
 Were quite forgot ; and now
 Their flocks, men might perceive
 To wander and to stray, 335
 All carelessly neglect ;
 And in the stead of mirth
 And pleasure, nights and days.
 Nought else was to be heard
 But woes, complaints, and mone. 340
 But thou (O blessed Soul !)
 Dost haply not respect
 These tears we shed, though full
 Of loving pure aspect ;
 Having affix'd thine eye 345
 On that most glorious throne,
 Where, full of majesty,
 The high Creator reigns ;
 In whose bright shining face
 Thy joys are all complete, 350
 Whose love kindles thy spright ;
 Where happy always one

Thou liv'st in bliss
 That earthly passion never stains;
 Where from the purest spring, 355
 The sacred nectar sweet
 Is thy continual drink;
 Where thou dost gather now
 Of well employed life
 Th' inestimable gains; 360
 Where Venus on thee smiles,
 Apollo gives thee place,
 And Mars, in reverent wise
 Doth to thy vertue bow,
 And decks his fiery spear 365
 To do thee honour most:
 In highest part whereof,
 Thy valour for to grace,
 A chair of gold he sets
 To thee, and there doth tell 370
 Thy noble acts anew,
 Whereby even they that boast
 'Themselves of ancient fame
 As Pyrrhus, Hannibal,
 Scipio, and Cæsar, with 375
 'The rest that did excel
 In martial prowess, high
 Thy glory do admire.
 All hail! therefore,
 O worthy Philip, immortal! 380
 The flowre of Sydney's race!
 The honour of thy name!

Whose worthy praise to sing
My Muses not aspire ;
But, sorrowful and sad,
These tears to thee let fall.
Yet wish their verses might
So far and wide thy fame
Extend, that envy's rage
Nor time might end the same.

385

390



THE TEARS
OF
THE MUSES.

To the right honourable

THE LADY STRANGE.

MOST brave and noble Lady ! the things that make ye so much honoured of the world as ye be, are such as (without my simple lines' testimony) are throughly known to all men, namely, your excellent beauty, your vertuous behaviour, and your noble match with that most honourable lord, the very pattern of right nobility : but the causes for which ye have deserved of me to be honoured (if honour it be at all) are both your particular bounties, and also some private bands of affinity which it hath pleased your Ladyship to acknowledge ; of which whenus I found my self in no part worthy, I devised this last slender means, both to intimate my humble affection to your Ladyship, and also to make the same universally known to the world, that by honouring you they might know me, and by knowing me they might honour you.

Vouchsafe, noble Lady ! to accept this simple remembrance, though not worthy of your self, yet such as, perhaps, by good acceptance thereof, ye may hereafter cull out a more meet and memorable evidence of your own excellent deserts. So, recommending the same to your Ladyship's good liking, I humbly take leave.

Your Ladyship's humbly ever,

EDMUND SPENSER.

THE TEARS
OF
THE MUSES.

REHERSE to me, ye sacred Sisters Nine !
The golden brood of great Apollo's wit,
Those piteous plaints and sorrowful sad time
Which late you poured forth as ye did sit
Beside the silver springs of Helicone, 5
Making your musick of heart-breaking mone :

For since the time that Phœbus' foolish son
Ythundered, through Jove's avengeful wrath,
For traversing the charret of the sun
Beyond the compass of the pointed path, 10
Of you his mournful sisters was lamented,
Such mournful tunes were never since invented.

Nor since that fair Calliope did lose
Her loved twins, the dearlings of her joy,
Her Palici, whom her unkindly foes, 15
The Fatal Sisters, did for spight destroy,
Whom all the Muses did bewail long space,
Was ever heard such wailing in this place.

For all their groves, which with the heavenly noises
 Of their sweet instruments were wont to sound, 20
 And th'hollow hills, from which their silver voices
 Were wont redoubled ecchoes to rebound,
 Did now rebound with nought but rueful cries,
 And yelling shrieks thrown up into the skies.

The trembling streams, which wont in channels clear
 To rumble gently down with murmur soft, 26
 And were by them right tuneful taught to bear
 A base's part amongst their consorts oft,
 Now forc'd to overflow with brackish tears,
 With troublous noise did dull their dainty ears. 30

The joyous Nymphs, and light-foot Fairies,
 Which thither came to hear their musick sweet,
 And to the measures of their melodies
 Did learn to move their nimble-shifting feet,
 Now hearing them so heavily lament, 35
 Like heavily lamenting from them went.

And all that else was wont to work delight
 Through the divine infusion of their skill,
 And all that else seem'd fair and fresh in sight,
 So made by Nature for to serve their will, 40
 Was turned now to dismal heaviness,
 Was turned now to dreadful ugliness.

Ay me! what thing on earth, that all things breeds,
 Might be the cause of so impatient plight?



*The joyous Nymphs, & light foot-fairies,
Which thither came to hear their musick sweet;
And to the measures set—*



What fury or what fiend, with felon deeds, 45
 Hath stirred up so mischievous despight?
 Can grief then enter into heavenly hearts,
 And pierce immortal breasts with mortal smarts?

Vouchsafe ye then, whom only it concerns,
 To me those secret causes to display, 50
 For none but you, or who of you it learns,
 Can rightfully aread so doleful lay,
 Begin, thou eldest sister of the crew,
 And let the rest in order thee ensue.

CLIO.

HEAR, thou great Father of the gods on high, 55
 That most art dreaded for thy thunder-darts,
 And thou our sire, that reign'st in Castalie,
 And Mount Parnass, the god of goodly art;
 Hear and behold the miserable state
 Of us, thy daughters, doleful desolate. 60

Behold the foul reproach and open shame,
 The which is day by day unto us wrought,
 By such as hate the honour of our name,
 The foes of learning, and each gentle thought;
 They, not contented us themselves to scorn, 65
 Do seek to make us of the world forlorn.

Ne only they that dwell in lowly dust,
 The sons of Darkness and of Ignorance,
 But they whom thou, great Jove! by doom unjust,
 Didst to the type of honour earst advance; 70

They now, puft up with 'sdeignful insolence,
 Despise the brood of blessed Sapience.

The sectaries of my celestial skill,
 That wont to be the world's chief ornament,
 And learned imps that wont to shoot up still, 75
 And grow to height of kingdom's government,
 They under keep, and with their spreading arms
 Do beat their buds, that perish through their
 harms.

It most behoves the honourable race
 Of mighty peers true wisdom to sustain, 80
 And with their noble countenance to grace
 'The learned foreheads without gift or gain ;
 Or rather learn'd themselves behoves to be,
 That is the girlond of nobility.

But (ah !) all otherwise they do esteem 85
 Of th' heavenly gift of wisdom's influence,
 And to be learned it a base thing deem ;
 Base minded they that want intelligence ;
 For God himself for wisdom most is prais'd,
 And men to God thereby are nighest rais'd. 90

But they do only strive themselves to raise
 Through pompous pride and foolish vanity ;
 In th' eyes of people they put all their praise,
 And only boast of arms and ancestry ;
 But vertuous deeds, which did those arms first give
 To their grandsires, they care not to atchieve. 96

So I, that do all noble feats profess
 To register, and sound in trump of gold,
 Through their bad doings or base slothfulness
 Find nothing worthy to be writ or told ; 100
 For better far it were to hide their names,
 Than telling them to blazon out their blames.

So shall succeeding ages have no light
 Of things forepast, nor monuments of time,
 And all that in this world is worthy hight 105
 Shall die in darkness, and lie hid in slime ;
 Therefore I mourn with deep heart's sorrowing,
 Because I nothing noble have to sing.

With that she rain'd such store of streaming tears,
 That could have made a stony heart to weep, 110
 And all her sisters rent their golden hears,
 And their fair faces with salt humour steep.
 So ended she ; and then the next in rew
 Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensue.

MELPOMENE.

O who shall pour into my swollen eyes 115
 A sea of tears that never may be dride !
 A brazen voice that may with shrilling cries
 Pierce the dull heavens, and fill the air so wide !
 And iron sides, that sighing may endure,
 To wail the wretchedness of world impure ? 120

Ah ! wretched World ! the den of wickedness,
 Deform'd with filth and foul iniquity ;

Ah ! wretched World ! the house of heaviness,
 Fill'd with the wrecks of mortal misery ;
 Ah ! wretched World ! and all that is therein, 125
 The vassals of God's wrath, and slaves of sin.

Most miserable creature under sky
 Man without understanding doth appear,
 For all this world's affliction he thereby,
 And Fortune's freaks, is wisely taught to bear ;
 Of wretched life the only joy she is, 131
 And the only comfort in calamities.

She arms the breast with constant patience
 Against the bitter throws of Dolour's darts ;
 She solaceth with rules of sapience 135
 The gentle minds, in midst of worldly smarts :
 When he is sad she seeks to make him merry,
 And doth refresh his sprights when they be weary.

But he that is of reason's skill bereft,
 And wants the staff of wisdom him to stay, 140
 Is like a ship in midst of tempest left,
 Withouten helm or pilot her to sway :
 Full sad and dreadful is that ship's event ;
 So is the man that wants entendiment.

Why then do foolish men so much despise 145
 The precious store of these celestial riches ?
 Why do they banish us, that patronize
 The name of Learning ? Most unhappy wretches !

'The which lie drowned in deep wretchedness,
Yet do not see their own unhappiness. 150

My part it is, and my professed skill,
The stage with tragick buskins to adorn,
And fill the scene with plaints and outcries shrill
Of wretched persons to misfortune born ;
But none more tragick matter I can find 155
Than this, of men depriv'd of sense and mind.

For all man's life me seems a tragedy
Full of sad sights and sore catastrophes ;
First coming to the world with weeping eye,
Where all his days, like dolorous trophies, 160
Are heapt with spoils of fortune and of fear,
And he at last laid forth on baleful bier.

So all with rueful spectacles is fill'd,
Fit for Megæra or Persephone,
But I, that in true tragedies am skill'd, 165
The flowre of wit find nought to busy me,
Therefore I mourn and pitifully mone,
Because that mourning matter I have none.

'Then 'gan she woefully to wail, and wring
Her wretched hands in lamentable wise ; 170
And all her sisters thereto answering
Threw forth loud shrieks and drery doleful cries.
So rested she ; and then the next in row
Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensue.

THALIA.

WHERE be the sweet delights of learning's treasure,
 That wont with comick sock to beautify 176
 The painted theatres, and fill with pleasure
 The listners' eyes and ears with melody,
 In which I late was wont to reign as queen,
 And mask in mirth with graces well beseen? 180

O! all is gone; and all that goodly Glee,
 Which wont to be the glory of gay wits,
 Is laid abed, and no where now to see,
 And in her room unseemly Sorrow sits,
 With hollow brows and griesly countenance 185
 Marring my joyous gentle dalliance.

And him besides sits ugly Barbarism,
 And brutish Ignorance, ycrept of late
 Out of drad darkness of the deep abysm,
 Where being bred, he light and heaven does hate:
 They in the minds of men now tyrannize, 191
 And the fair scene with rudeness foul disguise.

All places they with folly have possest,
 And with vain toys the vulgar entertain,
 But me have banished, with all the rest 195
 That whilom wont to wait upon my train,
 Fine Counterfesance, and unhurtful Sport,
 Delight, and Laughter, deckt in seemly sort.

All these, and all that else the comick stage
 With season'd wit and goodly pleasance grac'd,

By which man's life in his likest image, 201
 Was limned forth, are wholly now defac'd ;
 And those sweet wits, which wont the like to frame,
 Are now despis'd, and made a laughing game.

And he, the man whom Nature self had made 205
 To mock her self, and truth to intimate,
 With kindly counter under mimick shade,
 Our pleasant Willy, ah ! is dead of late ;
 With whom all joy and jolly merriment
 Is also deaded, and in dolour drent. 210

In stead thereof, scoffing Scurrility,
 And scorning Folly with Contempt is crept,
 Rolling in rimes of shameless ribaudry
 Without regard, or due decorum kept ;
 Each idle wit at will presumes to make, 215
 And doth the learned's task upon him take.

But that same gentle spirit, from whose pen
 Large streams of honey and sweet nectar flow,
 Scorning the holdness of such base-born men,
 Which dare their follies forth so rashly throw, 220
 Doth rather choose to sit in idle cell,
 Than so himself to mockery to sell.

So am I made the servant or the many,
 And laughing-stock of all that list to scorn,
 Not honoured nor cared for of any, 225
 But loath'd of losels as a thing forlorn ;

Therefore I mourn and sorrow with the rest,
Until my cause of sorrow be redrest.

Therewith she loudly did lament and shriek,
Pouring forth streams of tears abundantly, 230
And all her sisters, with compassion like,
The breaches of her singults did supply.
So rested she; and then the next in row
Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensue.

EUTERPE.

LIKE as the dearling of the summer's pride, 235
Fair Philomele! when winter's stormy wrath
The goodly fields, that erst so gay were dy'd
In colours divers, quite despoiled hath,
All comfortless doth hide her cheerless head
During the time of that her widowhead; 240

So we, that erst were wont in sweet accord
All places with our pleasant notes to fill,
Whilst favourable times did us afford
Free liberty to chaunt our charms at will,
All comfortless upon the bared bow, 245
Like woful culvers, do sit wailing now.

For far more bitter storm than winter's stower,
The beauty of the world hath lately wasted,
And those fresh buds, which wont so fair to
flower,
Hath marred quite, and all their blossoms blasted;

And those young plants, which wont with fruit
t' abound; 251

Now without fruit or leaves are to be found.

A stony coldness hath benumb'd the sense
And lively spirits of each living wight,
And dimm'd with darkness their intelligence, 255
Darkness more than Cymmerians' daily night;
And monstrous Error, flying in the air,
Hath marr'd the face of all that seemed fair.

Image of hellish Horror, Ignorance,
Born in the bosom of the black abyss, 260
And fed with Furies' milk for sustenance
Of his weak infancy, begot amiss
By yawning Sloth on his own mother Night,
So he his sons both sire and brother hight : 264

He, arm'd with blindness and with boldness stout,
(For blind is bold) hath our fair light defaced,
And gathering unto him a ragged rout
Of Fauns and Satyrs, hath our dwellings raced,
And our chaste bowers, in which all vertue reign'd,
With brutishness and beastly filth hath stain'd. 270

The sacred springs of horse-foot Helicon,
So oft bedewed with our learned layes,
And speaking streams of pure Castalion,
The famous witness of our wonted praise, 274
They trampled have with their foul footing's tread,
And like to troubled puddles have them made.

Our pleasant groves, which planted were with plains,
 That with out musick wont so oft to ring,
 And arbours sweet, in which the shepherds' swains
 Were wont so oft their pastorals to sing, 280
 They have cut down, and all their pleasure marr'd,
 That now no pastoral is to be heard.

In stead of them, foul goblins and shriek-owls,
 With fearful howling do all places fill,
 And feeble Eccho now laments and howls 285
 The dreadful accents of their out-cries shrill :
 So all is turned into wilderness,
 Whilst Ignorance the Muses doth oppress.

And I, whose joy was earst with spirit full,
 To teach the warbling pipe to sound aloft, 290
 My spirits, now dismay'd with sorrow dull,
 Do mone my misery with silence soft ;
 Therefore I mourn and wail incessantly,
 Till please th' Heavens afford me remedy.

Therewith she wailed with exceeding wo, 295
 And piteous lamentation did make ;
 And all her sisters seeing her do so,
 With equal complaints her sorrow did partake.
 So rested she ; and then the next in rew
 Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensue. 300

TERPSICHORE.

W^HOSO hath in the lap of soft Delight
 Been long time lull'd, and fed with pleasure sweet,

Fearless through his own fault or Fortune's spight
 To tumble into sorrow and regret,
 If chance him fall into calamity, 305
 Finds greater burthen of his misery.

So we, that earst in joyance did abound,
 And in the bosom of all bliss did sit,
 Like virgin queens, with laurel garlands crown'd,
 For vertue's meed and ornament of wit, 310
 Sith Ignorance our kingdom did confound,
 Be now become most wretched wights on ground.

And in our royal thrones, which lately stood
 In th' hearts of men to rule them carefully,
 He now hath placed his accursed brood, 315
 By him begotten of foul Infamy ;
 Blind Error, scornful Folly, and base Spight,
 Who hold by wrong that we should have by right.

They to the vulgar sort now pipe and sing,
 And make them merry with their fooleries ; 320
 They cheerly chant, and rimes at random fling,
 The fruitful spawn of their rank fantasies :
 They feed the ears of fools with flattery,
 And good men blame, and losels magnify.

All places they do with their toys possess, 325
 And reign in liking of the multitude ;
 The schools they fill with fond new-fangleness,
 And sway in court with pride and rashness rude :

'Mongst simple shepherds they do boast their skill,
And say their musick matcheth Phœbus' quill. 330

The noble hearts to pleasures they allure,
And tell their prince that learning is but vain ;
Fair ladies loves they spot with thoughts impure,
And gentle minds with leud delights distain :
Clerks they to loathly idleness intice, 335
And fill their books with discipline of vice.

So every where they rule and tyrannize,
For their usurped kingdom's maintenance,
The whiles we silly maids, whom they despize,
And with reproachful scorn discountenance, 340
From our own native heritage exil'd,
Walk through the world, of every one revil'd.

Nor any one doth care to call us in,
Or once vouchsafeth us to entertain
Unless some one, perhaps of gentle kin, 345
For pities sake compassion our pain,
And yield us some relief in this distress ;
Yet to be so reliev'd is wretchedness.

So wander we all careful comfortless,
Yet none doth care to comfort us at all ; 350
So seek we help our sorrow to redress,
Yet none vouchsafes to answer to our call ;
'Therefore we mourn and pitiless complain,
Because none living pitieth our pain.

With that she wept and woefully lamented, 355
 That nought on earth her grief might pacify,
 And all the rest her doleful din augmented
 With shrieks, and groans, and grievous agony.
 So ended she ; and then the next in reu
 Began her piteous plaint, as doth ensue. 360

ERATO.

YE gentle Spirits ! breathing from above,
 Where ye in Venus' silver bowre were bred,
 Thoughts half divine, full of the fire of love,
 With beauty kindled, and with pleasure fed,
 Which ye now in security possess, 365
 Forgetful of your former heaviness ;

Now change the tenor of your joyous layes,
 With which ye use your loves to deify,
 And blazon forth an earthly beauty's praise
 Above the compass of the arched sky : 370
 Now change your praises unto piteous cries,
 And eulogies turn into elegies.

Such as ye wont whenas those bitter stounds
 Of raging love first gan you to torment, 374
 And launce your hearts with lamentable wounds
 Of secret sorrow and sad languishment,
 Before your loves did take you unto grace ;
 Those now renew, as fitter for this place.

For I, that rule in measure moderate
 The tempest of that stormy passion, 380

And use to paint in rimes the troublous state
 Of lover's life in likest fashion,
 Am put from practise of my kindly skill,
 Banish'd by those that love with lewdness fill.

Love wont to be school-master of my skill, 385
 And the deviceful matter of my song;
 Sweet Love ! devoid of villany or ill,
 But pure and spotless, as at first he sprong
 Out of th' Almighty's bosom, where he nests,
 From thence infused into mortal breasts. 390

Such high conceit of that celestial fire,
 'The base-born brood of Blindness cannot ghesse,
 Ne never dare their dunghil thoughts aspire
 Unto so lofty pitch of perfectness,
 But rime at riot, and do rage in love, 395
 Yet little wote what doth thereto behove.

Fair Cytheree ! the mother of Delight,
 And Queen of beauty, now thou may'st go pack,
 For lo ! thy kingdom is defaced quight,
 Thy scepter rent, and power put to wrack ; 400
 And thy gay son, the winged God of Love,
 May now go prune his plumes like ruffed dove.

And ye three Twins, to light by Venus brought,
 The sweet companions of the Muses late,
 From whom what-ever thing is goodly thought, 405
 Doth borrow grace, the fancy to aggrate,

Go beg with us, and be companions still,
As heretofore of good, so now of ill.

For neither you nor we shall any more
Find entertainment or in court or school ; 410
For that which was accounted heretofore
The learned's meed, is now lent to the fool :
He sings of love, and maketh loving lays,
And they him hear, and they him highly praise.

With that she poured forth a brackish flood 415
Of bitter tears, and made exceeding mone ;
And all her sisters seeing her sad mood,
With loud laments her answer'd all at one.
So ended she ; and then the next in row
Began her grievous plaint, as doth ensue. 420

CALLIOPE.

To whom shall I my evil case complain,
Or tell the anguish of my inward smart,
Sith none is left to remedy my pain,
Or deigns to pity a perplexed heart,
But rather seeks my sorrow to augment . 425
With foul reproach and cruel banishment ?

For they to whom I used to apply
The faithful service of my learned skill,
The goodly off-spring of Jove's progeny,
That wont the world with famous acts to fill, 430

Whose living praises in heroick stile
It is my chief profession to compile ;

They, all corrupted through the rust of time,
That doth all fairest things on earth deface,
Or through unnoble sloth or sinful crime, 435
That doth degenerate the noble race,
Have both desire of worthy deeds forlorn,
And name of learning utterly do scorn.

Ne do they care to have the auncestry
Of th' old heroes memoriz'd anew ; 440
Ne do they care that late posterity
Should know their names, or speak their praises due,
But die forgot, from whence at first they sprong,
As they themselves shall be forgot ere long.

What boots it then to come from glorious 445
Forefathers, or to have been nobly bred ?
What odds 'twixt Irus and old Inachus,
'Twixt best and worst, when both alike are ded,
If none of neither mention should make,
Nor out of dust their memories awake ? 450

Or who would ever care to do brave deed,
Or strive in vertue others to excel,
If none should yield him his deserved meed,
Due praise, that is the spur of doing well ?
For if good were not praised more than ill, 455
None would chuse goodness of his own free-will.

Therefore the Nurse of Vertue I am hight,
And Golden Trumpet of eternity,
That lowly thoughts lift up to heaven's height,
And mortal men have power to deify : 460
Bacchus and Hercules I rais'd to heaven,
And Charlemain amongst the starry seaven.

But now I will my golden clarion rend,
And will henceforth immortalize no more,
Sith I no more find worthy to commend 465
For prize of value, or for learned lore ;
For noble peers whom I was wont to raise,
Now only seek for pleasure, nought for praise.

Their great revenues all in sumptuous pride
They spend, that nought to learning they may
spare: 470

And the rich fee which poets wont divide,
Now parasites and sycophants do share ;
Therefore I mourn and endless sorrow make,
Both for my self and for my sisters' sake.

With that she loudly 'gan to wail and shriek, 475
And from her eyes a sea of tears did poure,
And all her sisters, with compassion like,
Did more increase the sharpness of her showre.
So ended she ; and then the next in row
Began her plaint, as doth herein ensue. 480

URANIA.

WHAT wrath of gods, or wicked influence
Of stars, conspiring wretched men t'afflict,
Hath pour'd on earth this noxious pestilence,
That mortal minds doth inwardly infect
With love of blindness and of ignorance, 485
To dwell in darkness without soverance ?

What difference 'twixt man and beast is left,
When th' heavenly light of knowledge is put out,
And th' ornaments of wisdom are bereft ?
Then wandreth he in error and in doubt, 490
Unweeting of the danger he is in,
Through fleshs frailty, and deceit of sin.

In this wide world in which they wretches stray,
It is the only comfort which they have,
It is their light, their load-star, and their day ; 495
But hell, and darkness, and the grisly grave,
Is ignorance, the enemy of grace,
That minds of men born heavenly doth debace.

Through knowledge we behold the World's crea-
tion,
How in his cradle first he fostered was, 500
And judge of Nature's cunning operation,
How things she formed of a formless mass ;
By knowledge we do learn our selves to know,
And what to man, and what to God, we owe.

From hence we mount aloft into the sky, 505
 And look into the crystal firmament;
 There we behold the heaven's great hierarchy,
 The stars' pure light, the spheres' swift movement,
 The spirits and intelligences fair,
 And angels waiting on th' Almighty's chair. 510

And there, with humble mind and high insight,
 Th' Eternal Maker's majesty we view,
 His love, his truth, his glory, and his might,
 And mercy, more than mortal men can view.
 O sovereign Lord ! O sovereign happiness ! 515
 To see thee and thy mercy measureless !

Such happiness have they that do embrace
 The precepts of my heavenly discipline ;
 But shame and sorrow, and accursed ease,
 Have they that scorn the school of arts divine, 520
 And banish me, which do possess the skill
 To make men heavenly-wise through humbled will.

However yet they me despise and spight,
 I feed on sweet contentment of my thought,
 And please my self with mine own-self delight, 525
 In contemplation of things heavenly wrought:
 So loathing earth I look up to the sky,
 And being driven hence, I thither fly.

Thence I behold the misery of men,
 Which want the bliss that wisdom would them breed,

And like brute beasts do lie in loathsom den 531
 Of ghostly darkness and of ghastly dreed ;
 For whom I mourn, and for my self complain,
 And for my sisters eke, whom they disdain.

With that she wept and wail'd so piteously, 535
 As if her eyes had been two springing wells ;
 And all the rest, her sorrow to supply,
 Did throw forth shrieks, and cries, and drery yells.
 So ended she, and then the next in rew
 Began her mournful plaint, as doth ensue. 540

POLYHYMNIA.

A DOLEFUL case desires a doleful song,
 Without vain art or curious complements,
 And squallid fortune into baseness flong,
 Doth scorn the pride of wonted ornaments :
 Then fittest are these ragged rimes for me, 545
 To tell my sorrows, that exceeding be.

For the sweet numbers and melodious measures
 With which I wont the winged words to ty,
 And make a tuneful diapase of pleasures,
 Now being let to run at liberty 550
 By those which have no skill to rule them right,
 Have now quite lost their natural delight.

Heaps of huge words uphoorded hideously,
 With horrid sound, though having little sense,
 They think to be chief praise of poetry, 555
 And thereby wanting due intelligence,

Have marr'd the face of goodly Poesie,
And made a monster of their fantasie.

Whilom in ages past none might profess,
But princes and high priests, that secret skill ; 560
The sacred laws therein they wont express,
And with deep oracles their verses fill ;
Then was she held in sovereign dignity,
And made the noursling of nobility.

But now nor prince nor priest doth her maintain, 565
But suffer her prophaned for to be
Of the base vulgar, that with hands unclean
Dares to pollute her hidden mysterie,
And treadeth under foot her holy things,
Which was the care of kesars and of kings. 570

One only lives, her age's ornament,
And mirror of her Maker's majesty,
That with rich bounty and dear cherishment,
Supports the praise of noble Poesie ;
Ne only favours them which it profess, 575
But is herself a peerless poetress.

Most peerless prince, most peerless poetress !
The true Pandora of all heavenly graces,
Divine Eliza, sacred emperess !
Live she for ever, and her royal places 580
Be fill'd with praises of divinest wits,
That her enternize with their heavenly writs.

Some few beside this sacred skill esteem,
 Admirers of her glorious excellence,
 Which being lightned with her beauty's beam, 585
 Are thereby fill'd with happy influence,
 And lifted up above the worldes gaze,
 To sing with angels her immortal praize.

But all the rest, as born of salvage brood,
 And having been with acorns always fed, 590
 Can no whit savour this celestial food,
 But with base thoughts are into blindness led,
 And kept from looking on the lightsom day,
 For whom I wail and weep all that I may.

Eftsoons such store of tears she forth did powre,
 As if she all to water would have gone, 596
 And all her sisters, seeing her sad stowre,
 Did weep and wail, and made exceeding mone,
 And all their learned instruments did break ;
 The rest untold, no living tongue can speak. 600

THE RUINES OF ROME.

BY BELLAY.

I.

YE heavenly Spirits ! whose ashy cinders lie
Under deep ruines, with huge walls opprest,
But not your praise, the which shall never die
Through your fair verses, ne in ashes rest ;
If so be shrilling voice of wight alive
May reach from hence to depth of darkest hell,
Then let those deep abysses open rive,
That ye may understand my shrieking yell.
Thrice having seen, under the heaven's veil,
Your tombs' devoted compass over all,
Thrice unto you with loud voice I appeal,
And for your antique fury here do call,
The whiles that I with sacred horror sing
Your glory, fairest of all earthly thing.

II.

Great Babylon her haughty walls will praise,
And sharped steeples high shot up in air ;
Greece will the old Ephesian buildings blaze,
And Nylus' nurslings their pyramids fair ;
The same yet vaunting Greece will tell the story
Of Jove's great image in Olympus placed,
Mausolus' work will be the Carians' glory,
And Crete will boast the Labyrinth now raced :
The antique Rhodian will likewise set forth
The great Coloss, erect to memory ;
And what else in the world is of like worth,
Some greater learned wit will magnify :
But I will sing, above all moniments,
Seven Roman hills, the world's seven wonderments.

III.

Thou Stranger ! which for Rome in Rome here seekest,
And nought of Rome in Rome perceiv'st at all,
These same old walls, old arches, which thou seest,
Old palaces, is that which Rome men call.
Behold what wreck, what ruine, and what waste,
And how that she, which with her mighty powre
Tam'd all the world, hath tam'd her self at last,
The prey of Time, which all things doth devoure.
Rome now of Rome is th' only funerall,
And only Rome of Rome hath victory ;
Ne ought save Tyber, hastning to his fall,
Remains of all, O world's inconstancy !
That which is firm doth flit and fall away,
And that is flitting doth abide and stay,

IV.

She, whose high top above the stars did sore,
One foot on Thetis, th' other on the Morning,
One hand on Scythia, th' other on the More,
Both heaven and earth in roundness compassing ;
Jove fearing, least if she should greater grow,
The giants old should once again arise, [now
Her whelm'd with hills, these seven hills, which be
Tombs of her greatness, which did threat the skies :
Upon her head he heapt Mount Saturnal,
Upon her belly th' antique Palatine,
Upon her stomach laid Mount Quirinal,
On her left hand the noysome Esquiline,
And Cælian on the right ; but both her feet
Mount Viminal and Aventine do meet.

V.

Who lists to see what-ever Nature, Art,
And Heaven could do, O Rome! thee let him see,
In case thy greatness he can guess in heart,
By that which but the picture is of thee.
Rome is no more! but if the shade of Rome
May of the body yield a seeming sight,
It's like a corse drawn forth out of the tomb
By magick skill out of eternal night :
The corps of Rome in ashes is entombed,
And her great spirit, rejoined to the spirit
Of this great mass, is in the same enwombed ;
But her brave writings, which her famous merit,
In spite of time, out of the dust doth rear,
Do make her idol through the world appear.

VI.

Such as the Berecynthian goddess bright,
In her swift charret, with high turrets crown'd,
Proud that so many gods she brought to light,
Such was this city in her good days found ;
This city, more than that great Phrygian mother,
Renown'd for fruit of famous progeny,
Whose greatness, by the greatness of none other,
But by her self her equal match could see :
Rome only might to Rome compared be,
And only Rome could make great Rome to tremble ;
So did the gods by heavenly doom decree
That other earthly powre should not resemble
Her that did match the whole earth's puissaunce,
And did her courage to the heavens advaunce.

VII.

Ye sacred Ruines ! and ye tragick Sights !
Which only do the name of Rome retain,
Old moniments, which of so famous sprights
The honour yet in ashes do maintain ;
Triumphant arcks, spyres neighbours to the skye,
That you to see doth th' heaven it self appall,
Alas ! by little ye to nothing fly,
The peoples fable and the spoil of all ;
And though your frames do for a time make war
'Gainst Time, yet Time in time shall ruinate
Your works and names, and your last reliques mar.
My sad desires rest therefore moderate ;
For if that time make end of thing so sure,
It als will end the pain which I endure.

VIII.

Through arms and vassals Rome the world subdu'd,
That one would ween that one sole city's strength
Both land and sea in roundness had surviev'd,
To be the measure of her breadth and length :
This people's vertue yet so fruitful was
Of vertuous nephews, that posterity,
Striving in powre their grand-fathers to pass,
The lowest earth joyn'd to the heavens high,
To th' end that having all parts in their powre,
Nought from the Roman empire might be quight,
And that though Time doth common-wealths devoure,
Yet no time should so low embase their hight,
That her head earth'd in her foundation deep,
Should not her name and endless honour keep.

IX.

Ye cruel stars! and eke ye gods unkind !
Heaven envious! and bitter stepdame Nature !
Be it by fortune or by course of kind
That ye do wield th' affairs of earthly creature,
Why have your hands long sithence travailed
To frame this world that doth endure so long ?
Or why were not these Roman palaces
Made of some matter no less firm and strong ?
I say not, as the common voice doth say,
That all things which beneath the moon have being
Are temporal, and subject to decay ;
But I say rather, though not all agreeing
With some that ween the contrary in thought,
That all this Whole shall one day come to nought.

X.

As that brave son of Æson, which by charms
Atchiev'd the Golden Fleece in Colchid land,
Out of the earth engendred men of arms
Of dragon's teeth, sown in the sacred sand ;
So this brave town, that in her youthly days
An hydra was of warriors glorious,
Did fill with her renowned noursling's praise
The fiery sun's both one and other house ;
But they at last, there being then not living
An Hercules, so rank seed to repress,
Emongst themselves with cruel fury striving,
Mow'd down themselves with slaughter merciless,
Renewing in themselves that rage unkind,
Which whilom did those earth-born brethren blind.

XI.

Mars, shaming to have given so great head
To his off-spring, that mortal puissance
Puft up with pride of Roman hardyhed,
Seem'd above Heaven's powre it self t'advance,
Cooling again his former kindled heat,
With which he had those Roman spirits fill'd,
Did blow new fire, and with enflamed breath
Into the Gothick cold hot rage instill'd ?
Then 'gan that nation, th' earth's new giants brood,
To dart abroad the thunder-bolts of war,
And beating down these walls with furious mood
Into her mother's bosom, all did mar,
To th' end that none, all were it Jove his sire,
Should boast himself of the Romane empire.

XII.

Like as whilom the children of the earth
Heapt hills on hills, to scale the starry skye,
And fight against the gods of heavenly birth,
Whiles Jove at them his thunder-bolts let flye ;
All suddenly, with lightning overthrown,
The furious squadrons down to ground did fall,
That th' earth, under her children's weight did grone,
And th' heavens in glory triumpht over all ;
So did that haughty front which heaped was
On these seven Roman hills, it self uprear
Over the world, and lift her lofty face
Against the heaven, that 'gan her force to fear :
But now the scorned fields bemone her fall,
And gods secure fear not her force at all.

XIII.

Not the swift fury of the flames aspiring,
Nor the deep wounds of victor's raging blade,
Nor ruthless spoil of souldiers blood-desiring,
The which so oft thee, Rome, their conquest made ;
Ne stroke on stroke of fortune variable,
Ne rust of age hating continuance,
Nor wrath of gods, nor spright of men unstable,
Nor thou oppos'd gainst thine own puissance ;
Nor th' horrible uprore of winds high blowing,
Nor swelling streams of that god snaky-paced,
Which hath so often with his overflowing
Thee drenched, have thy pride so much abased,
But that this nothing, which they have thee left,
Makes the world wonder what they from thee reft.

XIV.

As men in summer fearless pass the foord,
Which is in winter lord of all the plain,
And with his tumbling streams doth bear aboard
The ploughman's hope and shepherd's labour vain ;
And as the coward beasts use to despise
The noble lyon after his live's end,
Whetting their teeth, and with vain fool-hardise
Daring the foe that cannot him defend ;
And as at Troy most dastards of the Greeks
Did brave about the corps of Hector cold ;
So those which whilom wont with pallid cheeks
The Roman triumphs' glory to behold,
Now on these ashie tombs shew boldness vain,
And, conquer'd, dare the conquerour disdain.

XV.

Ye pallid Spirits ! and ye ashie Ghosts !
Which joyning in the brightness of your day, [boasts,
Brought forth those signs of your presumptuous
Which now their dusty reliques do bewray ;
Tell me, ye Spirits ! (sith the darksom river
Of Styx, not passable to souls returning,
Enclosing you in thrice three wards for ever,
Do not restrain your images still mourning)
Tell me then (for perhaps some one of you
Yet here above him secretly doth hide)
Do ye not feel your torments to accrew,
When ye sometimes behold the ruin'd pride
Of these old Roman works, built with your hands,
Now to become nought else but heaped sands ?

XVI.

Like as ye see the wrathful sea from far
In a great mountain heapt with hideous noyse,
Eftsoons of thousand billows shouldred nar,
Against a rock to break with dreadful poyse ;
Like as ye see fell Boreas with sharp blast
Tossing huge tempests through the troubled sky,
Eftsoons having his wide wings spent in wast,
To stop his weary cariere suddenly ;
And as ye see huge flames spread diversly,
Gather'd in one up to the heavens to spire,
Eftsoons consum'd to fall down feebily ;
So whylom did this monarchy aspire
As waves, as wind, as fire, spread over all,
Till it by fatal doom adown did fall.

XVII.

So long as Jove's great bird did make his flight,
Bearing the fire with which heaven doth us fray,
Heaven had not fear of that presumptuous might
With which the gyants did the gods assay ;
But all so soon as scorching sun had brent
His wings, which wont the earth to overspred,
The earth out of the massie womb forth sent
That antique horror which made heaven adred.
Then was the German Raven in disguise,
That Roman Eagle seen to cleave asunder,
And towards heaven freshly to arise
Out of these mountains, now consum'd to powder,
In which the fowl that serves to bear the lightning
Is now no more seen flying nor alighting.

XVIII.

These heaps of stones, these old walls which ye see,
Were first enclosures but of salvage soil,
And these brave palaces, which maistred be
Of Time, were shepherds' cottages sometime :
Then took the shepherd's kingly ornaments,
And the stout hynd arm'd his right hand with steel;
Eftsoons their rule of yearly presidents
Grew great, and six months greater a great deal,
Which made perpetual, rose to so great might,
That thence th' Imperial Eagle rooting took,
Till th' heaven it self opposing 'gainst her might,
Her power to Peter's successor betook,
Who shepherd-like (as Fates the same foreseeing)
Doth shew that all things turn to their first being.

XIX.

All that is perfect which th' heaven beautifies,
All that's imperfect, born below the moon,
All that doth feed our spirits and our eyes,
And all that doth consume our pleasures soon;
All the mishap the which our days outwears,
All the good hap of th' oldest times afore,
Rome, in the time of her great ancesters,
Like a Pandora, locked long in store :
But Destiny, this huge chaos turmoyling,
In which all good and evil was enclosed,
Their heavenly vertues from these woes assoyling,
Carried to heaven, from sinful bondage loosed :
But their great sins, the causers of their pain,
Under these antique ruins yet remain.

XX.

No otherwise than rainy cloud, first fed
With earthly vapours gather'd in the air,
Eftsoons in compass arch'd, to steep his hed,
Doth plunge himself in Thetys' bosom fair ;
And mounting up again from whence he came,
With his great belly spreads the dimmed world,
Till at the last, dissolving his moist frame
In rain, or snow, or hail, he forth is hord :
This city, which was first but shepherd's shade,
Uprising by degrees, grew to such height,
That queen of land and sea her self she made :
At last, not able to bear so great wight,
Her power disperst through all the world did vade,
To shew that all in th' end to nought shall fade.

XXI.

The same which Pyrrhus, and the puissance
Of Africk could not tame, that same brave city
Which, with stout courage arm'd against mischance,
Sustain'd the shock of common-enmity,
Long as her ship tost with so many freaks,
Had all the world in arms against her bent,
Was never seen that any fortune's wrecks
Could break her course, begun with brave intent ;
But when the object of her vertue fail'd,
Her power it self against it self did arm :
As he that having long in tempest sail'd,
Fain would arrive, but cannot for the storm,
If too great wind against the port him drive,
Doth in the port it self his vessal rive.

XXII.

When that brave honour of the Latine name,
Which mear'd her rule with Africa and Byze,
With Thames' inhabitants of noble fame,
And they which see the dawning day arise,
Her nourslings did with mutinous uprore
Hearten against her self, her conquer'd spoil,
Which she had won from all the world afore,
Of all the world was spoil'd within a while ;
So when the compass'd course of th' universe
In six and thirty thousand years is run,
The bands of th' elements shall back reverse
To their first discord, and be quite undone :
The seeds, of which all things at first were bred,
Shall in great Chaos' womb again be hid.

XXIII.

O wary wisdom of the man, that would
That Carthage towres from spoil should be forborn!
To th' end that his victorious people should
With cankering leisure not be overworn !
He well foresaw how that the Roman courage,
Impatient of pleasure's faint desires,
Through idleness would turn to civil rage,
And be her self the matter of her fires :
For in a people given all to ease,
Ambition is engendred easily ;
As in a vicious body, gross disease,
Soon grows through humours superfluity.
That came to pass, when, swoln with plenty's pride,
Nor prince, nor peer, nor kin, they would abide.

XXIV.

If the blind fury which wars breedeth oft,
Wonts not t' enrage the hearts of equal beasts,
Whether they fare on foot or fly aloft,
Or armed be with claws or scaly creasts,
What fell Erynnis with hot burning tongs,
Did gripe your hearts with noisom rage imbew'd,
That each to other working cruel wrongs,
Your blades in your own bowels you embrew'd ?
Was this (ye Romans !) your hard destiny,
Or some old sin, whose unappeased guilt
Pour'd vengeance forth on you eternally ?
Or brothers' blood, the which at first was spilt
Upon your walls, that God might not endure
Upon the same to set foundation sure ?

XXV.

O that I had the Thracian poet's harp,
For to awake out of th' infernal shade
Those antique Cæsars, sleeping long in dark,
The which this ancient city whilom made !
Or that I had Amphion's instrument,
To quicken with his vital notes' accord
The stony joints of these old walls, now rent,
By which th' Ausonian light might be restor'd ;
Or that at least I could with pensil fine
Fashion the pourtraicts of these palaces,
By pattern of great Virgil's spirit divine ;
I would assay with that which in me is,
To build with level of my lofty stile,
That which no hands can ever more compile.

XXVI.

Who list the Roman greatness forth to figure,
Him needeth not to seek for usage right
Of line, or lead, or rule, or square, to measure
Her length, her breadth, her deepness, or her hight;
But him behooves to view in compass round
All that the Ocean grasps in his long arms,
Be it where th' yearly star doth scorch the ground,
Or where cold Boreas blows his bitter storms. [Rome;
Rome was th' whole world, and all the world was
And if things nam'd their names do equalize,
When land and sea ye name, then name ye Rome,
And naming Rome ye land and sea comprize!
For th' ancient plot of Rome, displayed plain
The map of all the wide world doth contain.

XXVII.

Thou that at Rome astonish'd dost behold
The antique pride which menaced the sky,
These haughty heaps, these palaces of old,
These walls, these arks, these baths, these temples hie,
Judge by these ample Ruins' view the rest
The which injurious Time hath quite outworn,
Since of all workmen held in reckning best,
Yet these old fragments are for patterns born:
Then also mark how Rome from day to day,
Repairing her decayed fashion
Renews herself with buildings rich and gay,
That one would judge that the Roman dæmon
Doth yet himself with fatal hand enforce,
Again on foot to rear her pouldred corse.

XXVIII.

He that hath seen a great oak dry and dead,
Yet clad with reliques of some trophees old,
Lifting to heaven her aged hoary head,
Whose foot on ground hath left but feeble hold,
But half disbowel'd lies above the ground,
Shewing her wreathed roots and naked arms,
And on her trunk, all rotten and unsound,
Only supports her self for meat of worms,
And though she owe her fall to the first wind,
Yet of the devout people is ador'd,
And many young plants spring out of her rind;
Who such an oak hath seen, let him record
That such this city's honour was of yore,
And 'mongst all cities flourished much more.

XXIX.

All that which Egypt whilom did devise,
All that which Greece their temples to embrace,
After th' Ionick, Attick, Dorick guise,
Or Corinth, skill'd in curious works to grave;
All that Lysippus' practick art could form,
Apelles' wit, or Phidias his skill,
Was wont this ancient city to adorn,
And heaven it self with her wide wonders fill:
All that which Athens ever brought forth wise,
All that which Africk ever brought forth strange,
All that which Asia ever had of prise,
Was here to see. O marvailous great change!
Rome living was the world's sole ornàment,
And dead, is now the world's sole monument!

XXX.

Like as the seeded field green grass first shows,
Then from green grass into a stalk doth spring,
And from a stalk into an ear forth grows,
Which ear the fruitful grain doth shortly bring ;
And as in season due the husband mows
'The waving locks of those fair yellow hairs,
Which bound in sheaves, and laid in comely rows,
Upon the naked fields in stacks he rears ;
So grew the Roman empire by degree,
Till that barbarian hands it quite did spill,
And left of it but these old marks to see,
Of which all passers-by do somewhat pill ;
As they which glean, the reliques use to gather
Which th' husbandman behind him chanst to scatter.

. XXXI.

That same is now nought but a champain wide,
Where all this world's pride once was situate.
No blame to thee, whosoever doost abide
By Nyle, or Gange, or Tygrè, or Euphrate ;
Ne Africk thereof guilty is, nor Spain,
Nor the bold people by the 'Thamis' brinks,
Nor the brave warlike brood of Alemain,
Nor the born souldier which Rhine running drinks :
Thou only cause, O civil Fury ! art,
Which sowing in th' Æmathian fields thy spight,
Didst arm thy hand against thy proper heart,
To th' end that when thou wast in greatest hight
To greatness grown, through long prosperity,
Thou then adown might'st fall more horribly.

XXXII.

Hope ye, my Verses ! that posterity
Of age ensuing shall you ever read ?
Hope ye that ever immortality
So mean harp's work may challenge for her meed ?
If under heaven any endurance were,
These moniments, which not in paper writ,
But in porphyre and marble do appear,
Might well have hop'd to have obtained it.
Nath'less my lute, whom Phœbus deign'd to give,
Cease not to sound these old antiquities,
For if that Time do let thy glory live,
Well may'st thou boast, how ever base thou be,
That thou art first which of thy nation song
Th' old honour of the people gown'd long.

L'ENVOY.

BELLAY ! first garland of free poesy [wits,
That France brought forth, though fruitful of brave
Well worthy thou of immortality,
That long hast travel'd by thy learned writs,
Old Rome out of her ashes to revive,
And give a second life to dead decays ;
Needs must he all eternity survive,
That can to other give eternal days.
Thy days, therefore, are endless, and thy praise
Excelling all that ever went before ;
And after thee 'gins Bartas hie to raise
His heavenly Muse, th' Almighty to adore,
Live, happy Spirits ! th' honour of your name,
And fill the world with never-dying fame.

THE RUINES

OF

T I M E.

To the right noble and beautiful lady,
MARY, COUNTESS OF PEMBROOK.

*MOST honourable and bountiful Lady, there be long sithens deep sowed in my breast the seeds of most entire love and humble affection unto that most brave knight, your noble brother, deceased, which taking root, began in his lifetime somewhat to bud forth, and to show themselves to him, as then in the weakness of their first spring, and would in their riper strength (had it pleased high God till then to draw out his days) spired forth fruit of more perfection: but since God hath disdeigned the world of that most noble spirit, which was the hope of all learned men, and the patron of my young Muses, together with him both their hope of any further fruit was cut off, and also the tender delight of those their first blossoms nipped and quite dead; yet sithens my late coming into England, some friends of mine; (which might much prevail with me, and indeed command me) knowing with how straight bands of duty I was tyed to him, and also bound unto that noble house, (of which the chief hope then rested in him) have sought to revive them by upbraiding me, for that I have not shewed any thankful remembrance towards him, or any of them, but suffer their names to sleep in silence and forgetfulness: whom chiefly to satisfy, or else to avoid that foul blot of unthankfulness, I have conceived this small Poem, intituled by a general name of, *The World's Ruines*; yet specially intended to the renowning of that noble race from which both you and he sprong, and to the eternizing of some of the chief of them late deceased: the which I dedicate unto your Ladyship, as whom it most specially concerneth, and to whom I acknowledge my self bounden by many singular favours and great graces. I pray for your honourable happiness, and so humbly kiss your hands,*

Your Ladyship's ever

humbly at command,

EDMUND SPENSER.

T H E R U I N E S

O F

T I M E.

*I*T chaunced me one day beside the shore
Of silver streaming Thamesis to be,
Nigh where the goodly Verlame stood of yore,
Of which there now remains no memory,
Nor any little monument to see, 5
By which the traveller, that fares that way,
This once was she may warned be to say.

There on the other side I did behold
A woman sitting sorrowfully wailing,
Rending her yellow locks, like wiry gold, 10
About her shoulders carelessly down trailing,
And streams of tears from her fair eyes forth railing;
In her right hand a broken rod she held,
Which towards heavens she seem'd on high to weld.

Whether she were one of that river's nymphs, 15
Which did the loss of some dear love lament,
I doubt, or one of those three fatal imps
Which draw the days of men forth in extent,
Or th' ancient Genius of that city brent ;
But seeing her so piteously perplexed, 20
I (to her calling) ask'd what her so vexed ?

“ Ah what delight (quoth she) in earthly thing,
“ Or comfort, can I, wretched Creature ! have ?
“ Whose happiness the Heavens envying,
“ From highest stair to lowest step me drave, 25
“ And have in mine own bowels made my grave ;
“ That of all nations now I am forlorn,
“ The worlds sad spectacle, and Fortune's scorn.”

Much was I moved at her piteous plaint,
And felt my heart nigh riven in my breast, 30
With tender ruth to see her sore constraint,
That shedding tears awhile, I still did rest,
And after did her name of her request :
“ Name have I none, (quoth she) nor any being,
“ Bereft of both by Fate's unjust decreeing. 35

“ I was that city which the garland wore
“ Of Briton's pride, delivered unto me :
“ By Roman victors, which it won of yore,
“ Though nought at all but ruines now I be,
“ And lie in mine own ashes, as ye see : 40
“ Verlame I was ; what boots it that I was ;
“ Sith now I am but weeds and wasteful grass :

“ O vain world’s glory, and unstedfast state
“ Of all that lives on face of sinful earth !
“ Which from their first until their utmost date 45
“ Taste no one hour of happiness or mirth,
“ But like as at the ingate of their birth,
“ They crying creep out of their mother’s womb,
“ So wailing back go to their woeful tomb.

“ Why then doth flesh, a bubble-glass of breath, 50
“ Hunt after honour and advancement vain,
“ And rear a trophee for devouring Death,
“ With so great labour and long-lasting pain,
“ As if his days for ever should remain ?
“ Sith all that in this world is great or gay, 55
“ Doth as a vapour vanish and decay.

“ Look back who list unto the former ages,
“ And call to count what is of them become,
“ Where be those learned wits and antique sages
“ Which of all wisdom knew the perfect sum ? 60
“ Where those great warriors which did overcome
“ The world with conquest of their might and main,
“ And made one mear of th’earth and of their reign?

“ What now is of th’ Assyrian Lioness,
“ Of whom no footing now on earth appears ? 65
“ What of the Persian Bear’s outrageousness,
“ Whose memory is quite worn out with years ?
“ Who of the Grecian Libbard now ought hears,
“ That over-ran the East with greedy powre,
“ And left his whelps their kingdoms to devour ? 70

“ And where is that same great Seven-headed beast,
“ That made all nations vassals of her pride,
“ To fall before her feet at her behest,
“ And in the neck of all the world did ride? 74
“ Where doth she all that wondrous wealth now hide?
“ With her own weight down pressed now she lies,
“ And by her heaps her hugeness testifies.

“ O Rome! thy ruin I lament and rue,
“ And in thy fall my fatal overthrow, 79
“ That whilom was, whilst Heavens with equal view
“ Deign’d to behold me, and their gifts bestow,
“ The picture of thy pride in pompous show;
“ And of the whole world as thou wast the empress,
“ So I of this small northern world was princess.

“ To tell the beauty of my buildings fair, 85
“ Adorn’d with purest gold and precious stone;
“ To tell my riches and endowments rare,
“ That by my foes are now all spent and gone;
“ To tell my forces, matchable to none,
“ Were but lost labour, that few would believe, 90
“ And with rehearsing would me more agrieve.

“ High towers, fair temples, goodly theaters,
“ Strong walls, rich porches, princely palaces,
“ Large streets, brave houses, sacred sepulchres,
“ Sure gates, sweet gardens, stately galleries, 95
“ Wrought with fair pillars and fine imageries;
“ All those (O pity!) now are turn’d to dust,
“ And overgrown with black oblivion’s rust.

“ Thereto for warlike power and people’s store,
“ In Britanny was none to match with me, 100
“ That many often did aby full sore ;
“ Ne Troynovant, though elder sister she,
“ With my great forces may compared be ;
“ That stout Pendragon to his peril felt,
“ Who in a siege seven years about me dwelt. 105

“ But long e’er this Bunduca, Britonness,
“ Her mighty hoast against my bulwarks brought ;
“ Bunduca ! that victorious conqueress,
“ That lifting up her brave heroick thought 109
“ ’Bove women’s weakness, with the Romans fought,
“ Fought, and in field against them thrice prevailed ;
“ Yet was she foil’d whenas she me assailed.

“ And though at last by force I conquer’d were
“ Of hardy Saxons, and became their thrall,
“ Yet was I with much bloodshed bought full dear,
“ And priz’d with slaughter of their general, 116
“ The monument of whose sad funeral,
“ For wonder of the world, long in me lasted,
“ But now to nought, through spoil of time, is wasted.

“ Wasted it is, as if it ever were, 120
“ And all the rest, that me so honour’d made,
“ And of the world admired every where,
“ Is turn’d to smoak, that doth to nothing fade,
“ And of that brightness now appears no shade,
“ But griesly shades, such as do haunt in hell 125
“ With fearful fiends, that in deep darkness dwell.

“ Where my high steeples whilom us’d to stand,
“ On which the lordly falcon wont to towre,
“ There now is but an heap of lime and sand, 129
“ For the skriech-owl to build her baleful bowre ;
“ And where the nightingale wont forth to pour
“ Her restless plaints, to comfort wakeful lovers,
“ There now haunt yelling mews and whining plovers.

“ And where the chrystal Thamis wont to slide
“ In silver channel down along the lee, 135
“ About whose flowry banks on either side
“ A thousand nymphs, with mirthful jollitee,
“ Were wont to play, from all annoyance free,
“ There now no river’s course is to be seen,
“ But moorish fens, and marches ever green. 140

“ Seems that the gentle river, for great grief
“ Of my mishap, which oft I to him plained,
“ Or for to shun the horrible mischief
“ With which he saw my cruel foes me pained,
“ And his purestreams with guiltless blood oft stained,
“ From my unhappy neighbourhood far fled, 146
“ And his sweet waters away with him led.

“ There also, where the winged ships were seen
“ In liquid waves to cut their foamy way,
“ And thousand fishers numbred to have been 150
“ In that wide lake, looking for plenteous prey
“ Of fish, which they with baits us’d to betray,
“ Is now no lake, nor any fisher’s store,
“ Nor ever ship shall sail there any more.

“ They are all gone, and all with them is gone, 155
“ Ne ought to me remains but to lament
“ My long decay, which no man else doth mone,
“ And mourn my fall with doleful dreriment.
“ Yet is it comfort in great languishment,
“ To be bemoned with compassion kind, 160
“ And mitigates the anguish of the mind.

“ But me no man bewaileth but in game,
“ Ne sheddeth tears from lamentable eye,
“ Nor any lives that mentioneth my name
“ To be remembred of posterity, 165
“ Save one, that maugre Fortune’s injury,
“ And Time’s decay, and Envy’s cruel tort,
“ Hath writ my record in true seeming sort.

“ Cambden ! the nourice of Antiquity,
“ And lanthorn unto late succeeding age, 170
“ To see the light of simple verity,
“ Buried in ruines, through the great outrage
“ Of her own people, led with warlike rage ;
“ Cambden ! though time all monuments obscure,
“ Yet thy just labours ever shall endure. 175

“ But why (unhappy Wight !) do I thus cry,
“ And grieve that my remembrance quite is raced
“ Out of the knowledge of posterity,
“ And all my antique monuments defaced ?
“ Sith I do daily see things highest placed, 180
“ So soon as Fates their vital thred have shorn,
“ Förgotten quite, as they were never born.

“ It is not long since these two eyes beheld
“ A mighty prince, of most renowned race, 184
“ Whom England high in count of honour held,
“ And greatest ones did sue to gain his grace ;
“ Of greatest ones he greatest in his place,
“ Sate in the bosom of his sovereign,
“ And, right and loyal, did his word maintain.

“ I saw him die, I saw him die as one 190
“ Of the mean people, and brought forth on bier ;
“ I saw him die, and no man left to mone
“ His doleful fate, that late him loved dear ;
“ Scarce any left to close his eye-lids near ;
“ Scarce any left upon his lips to lay 195
“ The sacred sod, or *requiem* to say.

“ O trustless state of miserable men,
“ That build your bliss on hope of earthly thing,
“ And vainly think your selves half happy then,
“ When painted faces with smooth flattering, 200
“ Do fawn on you, and your wide praises sing !
“ And when the courting master louteth low,
“ Him true in heart and trusty to you trow !

“ All is but feigned, and with oaker dide,
“ That every shower will wash and wipe away: 205
“ All things do change that under heaven abide,
“ And after death all friendship doth decay :
“ Therefore, what-ever man bearest worldly sway,
“ Living, on God and on thy self rely,
“ For when thou diest all shall with thee die. 210

“ He now is dead, and all is with him dead,
“ Save what in heaven’s storehouse he uplaid ;
“ His hope is fail’d, and come to pass his dread,
“ And eyil men (now dead) his deeds upbraid :
“ Spight bites the dead, that living never baid. 215
“ He now is gone, the whiles the fox is crept
“ Into the hole the which the badger swept.

“ He now is dead, and all his glory gone,
“ And all his greatness vapoured to nought,
“ That as a glass upon the water shone, 220
“ Which vanisht quite so soon as it was sought :
“ His name is worn already out of thought,
“ Ne any poet seeks him to revive,
“ Yet many poets honour’d him alive.

“ Ne doth his Colin, careless Colin Clout, 225
“ Care now his idle bagpipe up to raise !
“ Ne tell his sorrow to the listning rout
“ Of shepherd grooms which wont his songs to praise :
“ Praise whoso list, yet I will him dispraise,
“ Until he quit him of this guilty blame : 230
“ Wake, shepherd’s Boy, at length awake for shame.

“ And whoso else did goodness by him gain,
“ And whoso else his bounteous mind did try,
“ Whether he shepherd be or shepherd’s swain,
“ (For many did, which do it now deny) 235
“ Awake, and to his song a part apply :
“ And I, the whilst you mourn for his decease,
“ Will with my mourning plaint your plaint increase.

“ He dyde, and after him his brother dyde,
“ His brother prince, his brother noble peer, 240
“ That whilst he lived was of none envyde,
“ And dead is now, as living, counted dear,
“ Dear unto all that true affection bear ;
“ But unto thee most dear, O dearest Dame !
“ His noble spouse, and paragon of fame, 245

“ He, whilst he lived, happy was through thee,
“ And being dead, is happy now much more ;
“ Living, that linked chaunst with thee to be,
“ And dead, because him dead thou doost adore
“ As living, and thy lost dear love deplore: 250
“ So whilst that thou, fair flower of Chastity !
“ Doost live, by thee thy lord shall never die.

“ Thy lord shall never die, the whiles this verse
“ Shall live, and surely it shall live for ever ;
“ For ever it shall live, and shall rehearse 255
“ His worthy praise, and vertues dying never,
“ Though death his soul do from his body sever:
“ And thou thy self herein shalt also live,
“ Such grace the heavens do to my verses give.

“ Ne shall his sister, ne thy father, die ; 260
“ Thy father, that good earl of rare renown,
“ And noble patron of weak poverty !
“ Whose great good deeds in country and in town
“ Have purchast him in heaven a happy crown,
“ Where he now liveth in eternal bliss, 265
“ And left his son t’ ensue those steps of his.

“ He, noble Bud ! his grandsire’s lively heir,
“ Under the shadow of thy countenance
“ Now gins to shoot up fast, and flourish fair
“ In learned arts and goodly governance, 270
“ That him to highest honour shall advance.
“ Brave Imp of Bedford ! grow apace in bounty,
“ And count of wisdom more than of thy county.

“ Ne may I let thy husband’s sister die,
“ That goodly lady, sith she eke did spring 275
“ Out of this stock and famous family,
“ Whose praises I to future age do sing,
“ And forth out of her happy womb did bring
“ The sacred brood of learning and all honour,
“ In whom the heavens pour’d all their gifts upon her.

“ Most gentle spirit, breathed from above, 281
“ Out of the bosom of the Maker’s bliss,
“ In whom all bounty and all vertuous love
“ Appeared in their native propertis,
“ And did enrich that noble breast of his 285
“ With treasure passing all this worldes worth,
“ Worthy of heaven it self, which brought it forth.

“ His blessed spirit, full of power divine,
“ And influence of all celestial grace,
“ Loathing this sinful earth and earthly slime, 290
“ Fled back too soon unto his native place ;
“ Too soon for all that did his love embrace ;
“ Too soon for all this wretched world, whom he
“ Robb’d of all right and true nobility.

“ Yet ere his happy soul to heaven went 295
“ Out of this fleshly goal, he did devise
“ Unto his heavenly Maker to present
“ His body as a spotless sacrifice,
“ And chose that guilty hands of enemies
“ Should pour forth th’ offering of his guiltless blood;
“ So life exchanging for his country’s good. 301

“ O noble Spirit ! live there ever blessed,
“ The world’s late wonder, and the heaven’s new joy;
“ Live ever there, and leave me here distressed
“ With mortal cares and cumbrous world’s annoy :
“ But where thou doost that happiness enjoy, 306
“ Bid me, O bid me quickly come to thee,
“ That happy there I may thee always see !

“ Yet whilst the Fates afford me vital breath,
“ I will it spend in speaking of thy praise, 310
“ And sing to thee until that timely death
“ By Heaven’s doom do end my earthly days :
“ Thereto do thou my humble spirit raise,
“ And into me that sacred breath inspire,
“ Which thou there breathest perfect and entire.

“ Then will I sing ; but who can better sing 316
“ Than thine own sister, peerless lady bright !
“ Which to thee sings with deep heart’s sorrowing,
“ Sorrowing tempered with dear delight ?
“ That her to hear I feel my feeble spright 320
“ Robbed of sense, and ravished with joy ;
“ O sad joy, made of mourning and annoy !

“ Yet will I sing ; but who can better sing
“ Than thou thy self, thine one self’s valiance, 324
“ That whilst thou livedst madest the forests ring,
“ And fields resound, and flocks to leap and dance,
“ And shepherds leave their lambs unto mischance,
“ To run thy shrill Arcadian pipe to hear?
“ O happy were those days ! thrice happy were.

“ But now more happy thou, and wretched we, 330
“ Which want the wonted sweetness of thy voice,
“ Whiles thou now in Elysian fields so free,
“ With Orpheus, with Linus, and the choice
“ Of all that ever did in rimes rejoyce,
“ Conversest, and doost hear their heavenly lays, 335
“ And they hear thine, and thine do better praise.

“ So there thou livest, singing evermore,
“ And here thou livest being ever song
“ Of us which living loved thee afore,
“ And now thee worship mongst that blessed throng
“ Of heavenly poets and heroes strong : 341
“ So thou both here and there immortal art,
“ And every where through excellent desart.

“ But such as neither of themselves can sing,
“ Nor yet are sung of others for reward, 345
“ Die in obscure oblivion as the thing
“ Which never was, ne ever with regard
“ Their names shall of the later age be heard,
“ But shall in rusty darkness ever lie,
“ Unless they mention’d be with infamy. 350

“ What booteth it to have been rich alive ?
“ What to be great ? What to be gracious ?
“ When after death no token doth survive
“ Of former being in this mortal house,
“ But sleeps in dust dead and inglorious ? 355
“ Like beast, whose breath but in his nostrils is,
“ And hath not hope of happiness or bliss.

“ How many great ones may remembred be,
“ Which in their days most famously did flourish,
“ Of whom no word we hear, nor sign now see, 360
“ But as things wip’d out with a sponge do perish,
“ Because they living cared not to cherish
“ No gentle wits, through pride or covetize,
“ Which might their names for ever memorize ?

“ Provide, therefore, (ye Princes !) whilst ye live,
“ That of the Muses ye may friended be, 366
“ Which unto men eternity do give ;
“ For they be daughters of Dame Memory
“ And Jove, the father of Eternity,
“ And do those men in golden thrones repose, 370
“ Whose merits they to glorify do chose.

“ The seven-fold yron gates of grisly hell,
“ And horrid house of sad Proserpina,
“ They able are with power of mighty spell
“ To break, and thence the souls to bring away 375
“ Out of drad darkness to eternal day,
“ And them immortal make which else would die
“ In foul forgetfulness, and nameless lie.

“ So whylom raised they the puissant brood
“ Of golden-girt Alcmena, for great merit, 380
“ Out of the dust to which the Oetæan wood
“ Had him consum’d, and spent his vital spirit
“ To highest heaven, where now he doth inherit
“ All happiness in Hebe’s silver bow’r,
“ Chosen to be her dearest paramour. 385

“ So rais’d they eke fair Leda’s warlike Twins,
“ And interchanged life unto them lent,
“ That when th’one dies, th’other then begins
“ To shew in heaven his brightness orient;
“ And they, for pity of the sad wayment 390
“ Which Orpheus for Eurydice did make,
“ Her back again to life sent for his sake.

“ So happy are they, and so fortunate,
“ Whom the Pierian sacred Sisters love,
“ That freed from bands of implacable fate, 395
“ And powre of death, they live for ay above,
“ Where mortal wrecks their bliss may not remove,
“ But with the gods, for former vertue’s meed,
“ On nectar and ambrosia do feed.

“ For deeds do die, however nobly done, 400
“ And thoughts of men do in themselves decay,
“ But wise words, taught in numbers for to run,
“ Recorded by the Muses, live for ay,
“ Ne may with storming showers be washt away;
“ Ne bitter breathing winds with harmful blast, 405
“ Nor age, nor envy, shall them ever wast.

“ In vain do earthly princes then, in vain,
“ Seek with pyramides to heaven aspired,
“ Or huge Colosses built with costly pain,
“ Or brasen pillows never to be fired, 410
“ Or shrines made of the metal most desired,
“ To make their memories for ever live ;
“ For how can mortal immortality give ?

“ Such one Mausolus made, the world’s great wonder,
“ But now no remnant doth thereof remain ; 415
“ Such one Marcellus, but was torn with thunder ;
“ Such one Lisippus, but is worn with rain ;
“ Such one King Edmond, but was rent for gain.
“ All such vain monuments of earthly mass,
“ Devour’d of Time, in time to nought do pass. 420

“ But Fame, with golden wings aloft doth fly
“ Above the reach of ruinous decay,
“ And with brave plumes doth beat the azure sky,
“ Admir’d of base-born men from far away ;
“ Then whoso will with vertuous deeds assay 425
“ To mount to heaven, on Pegasus must ride,
“ And with sweet poets’ verse be glorifide.

“ For not to have been dipt in Lethe lake
“ Could save the son of Thetis from to die,
“ But that blind bard did him immortal make 430
“ With verses dipt in dew of Castalie,
“ Which made the Eastern conquerour to cry,
“ O fortunate young Man ! whose vertue found
“ So brave a tromp thy noble acts to sound.

“ Therefore, in this half happy I do read 435
“ Good Melibæ, that hath a poet got
“ To sing his living praises being dead,
“ Deserving never here to be forgot,
“ In spite of Envy, that his deeds would spot :
“ Since whose decease learning lies unregarded, 440
“ And men of arms do wander unrewarded.

“ These two be those two great calamities
“ That long ago did grieve the noble spright
“ Of Salomon with great indignities,
“ Who whilom was alive the wisest wight ; 445
“ But now his wisdom is disproved quight ;
“ For he that now welds all things at his will,
“ Scorns th’ one and th’ other in his deeper skill.

“ O grief of griefs ! O gall of all good hearts !
“ To see that vertue should despised be 450
“ Of such as first were rais’d for vertuous parts,
“ And now broad spreading like an aged tree,
“ Let none shoot up that nigh them planted be :
“ O ! let not those of whom the Muse is scorned,
“ Alive nor dead, be of the Muse adorned ! 455

“ O vile world’s trust, that with such vain illusion
“ Hath so wise men bewicht and overkest,
“ That they see not the way of their confusion !
“ O vainness to be added to the rest,
“ That doth my soul with inward grief infest ! 460
“ Let them behold the piteous fall of me,
“ And in my case their own ensample see.

“ And whoso else that sits in highest seat
“ Of this world’s glory, worshipped of all,
“ Ne feareth change of time nor Fortune’s threat,
“ Let him behold the horror of my fall, 466
“ And his own end unto remembrance call,
“ That of like ruine he may warned be,
“ And in himself be mov’d to pity me.”

Thus having ended all her piteous plaint, 470
With doleful shrieks she vanished away,
That I through inward sorrow wexen faint,
And all astonished with deep dismay
For her departure, had no word to say,
But sate long time in senseless sad affright, 475
Looking still if I might of her have sight.

Which when I missed, having looked long,
My thought returned grieved home again,
Renewing her complaint with passion strong,
For ruth of that same woman’s piteous pain; 480
Whose words recording in my troubled brain,
I felt such anguish wound my feeble heart,
That frozen horror ran through every part.

So inly grieving in my groaning breast,
And deeply musing at her doubtful speech, 485
Whose meaning much I laboured forth to wrest,
Being above my slender reason’s reach,
At length, by demonstration me to teach,
Before mine eyes strange sights presented were,
Like tragick pageants seeming to appear. 490

I.

I saw an Image all of massie gold,
Placed on high upon an altar fair,
That all which did the same from far behold,
Might worship it, and fall on lowest stair :
Not that great idol might with this compare, 495
To which th'Assyrian tyrant would have made
The holy brethren falsly to have praid.

But th' altar on the which this Image staid,
Was (O great pity !) built of brittle clay,
That shortly the foundation decaid, 500
With show'rs of heaven and tempest worn away ;
Then down it fell, and low in ashes lay,
Scorned of every one which by it went,
That I it seeing dearly did lament.

II.

Next unto this a stately 'Towre appear'd, 505
Built all of richest stone that might be found,
And nigh unto the heavens in height uprear'd,
But placed on a plot of sandy ground :
Not that great towre which is so much renown'd
For tongues' confusion in Holy Writ, 510
King Ninus' work, might be compar'd to it.

But, O vain labours of terrestrial wit,
That builds so strongly on so frail a soil
As with each storm does fall away and flit,
And gives the fruit of all your travail's toil 515
To be the prey of Time and Fortune's spoil !

I saw this Towre fall suddenly to dust,
That nigh with grief thereof my heart was brust.

III.

Then did I see a pleasant Paradise,
Full of sweet flowres and daintiest delights, 520
Such as on earth man could not more devise,
With pleasures choice to feed his chearful sprights :
Not that which Merlin by his magick slights
Made for the gentle squire to entertain
His fair Belphebe, could this garden stain. 525

But O short pleasure, bought with lasting pain !
Why will hereafter any flesh delight
In earthly bliss, and joy in pleasures vain ?
Since that I saw this Garden wasted quight,
That where it was scarce seemed any sight, 530
That I, which once that beauty did behold,
Could not from tears my melting eyes with-hold.

IV.

Soon after this a Giant came in place,
Of wondrous powre and of exceeding stature,
That none durst view the horror of his face, 535
Yet was he mild of speech and meek of nature :
Not he which in despight of his Creatour
With railing terms defy'd the Jewish hoast,
Might with this mighty one in hugeness boast.

For from the one he could to th'other coast 540
Stretch his strong thighs, and th'ocean overstride,
And reach his hand into his enemies' hoast :

But see the end of pomp and fleshly pride !
One of his feet unwares from him did slide,
That down he fell into the deep abyss, 545
Where dround with him is all his earthly bliss.

V.

Then did I see a Bridge, made all of gold,
Over the sea from one to th' other side,
Withouten prop or pillour it t' uphold,
But like the coloured rainbow arched wide : 550
Not that great arch which Trajan edifice,
'To be a wonder to all age ensuing,
Was matchable to this in equal viewing.

But, ah ! what boots it to see earthly thing
In glory or in greatness to excel, 555
Sith time doth greatest things to ruin bring ?
This goodly Bridge, one foot not fastned well,
'Gan fail, and all the rest down shortly fell ;
Ne of so brave a building ought remained,
That grief thereof my spirit greatly pained. 560

VI.

I saw two Bears, as white as any milk,
Lying together in a mighty cave,
Of mild aspect, and hair as soft as silk,
That salvage nature seemed not to have,
Nor after greedy spoil of blood to crave : 565
Two fairer beasts might not else-where be found,
Although the compast world were sought around.

But what can long abide above this ground
In state of bliss, or stedfast happiness ?

The cave, in which these Bears lay sleeping sound,
 Was but of earth, and with her weightiness 571
 Upon them fell, and did unwares oppress,
 That for great sorrow of their sudden fate
 Henceforth all world's felicity I hate.

Much was I troubled in my heavy spright 575
 At sight of these sad spectacles forepast,
 That all my senses were bereaved quight,
 And I in mind remained sore agast,
 Distraught 'twixt fear and pity; when at last
 I heard a voice which loudly to me call'd, 580
 That with the suddain shrill I was appall'd.

Behold, (said it) and by ensample see
 That all is vanity and grief of mind, -
 Ne other comfort in this world can be
 But hope of heaven, and heart to God inclin'd,
 For all the rest must needs be left behind : 586
 With that it bade me to the other side
 To cast mine eye, where other sights I spide.

I.

Upon that famous river's further shore,
 There stood a snowy Swan, of heavenly hue 590
 And gentle kind, as ever fowl afore;
 A fairer one in all the goodly crew
 Of white Strimonian brood might no man view;
 There he most sweetly sung the prophecy
 Of his own death in doleful elegy. 595

At last, when all his mourning melody
He ended had, that both the shores resounded,
Feeling the fit that him forwarn'd to die,
With lofty flight about the earth he bounded,
And out of sight to highest heaven mounted, 600
Where now he is become an heavenly sign;
There now the joy is his, here sorrow mine.

II.

Whilst thus I looked, loe adown the lee
I saw an Harp, strung all with silver twine,
And made of gold and costly ivory, 605
Swimming, that whilom seemed to have been
The harp on which Dan Orpheus was seen
Wild beasts and forrests after him to lead,
But was th' Harp of Phillisides now dead.

At length out of the river it was rear'd, 610
And borne about the clouds to be divin'd,
Whilst all the way most heavenly noise was heard
Of the strings, stirred with the warbling wind,
That wrought both joy and sorrow in my mind;
So now in heaven a sign it doth appear, 615
The Harp, well known beside the Northern Bear.

III.

Soon after this I saw on th' other side
A curious Coffer made of heben wood,
That in it did most precious treasure hide,
Exceeding all this baser worldes good; 620
Yet through the overflowing of the flood
It almost drowned was, and done to nought,
That sight thereof much griev'd my pensive thought.

At length, when most in peril it was brought,
Two angels down descending with swift flight, 625
Out of the swelling stream it lightly caught,
And 'twixt their blessed arms it carried quight
Above the reach of any living sight;
So now it is transform'd into that star
In which all heavenly treasures locked are. 630

IV.

Looking aside, I saw a stately Bed,
Adorned all with costly cloth of gold,
That might for any prince's couch be red,
And deckt with dainty flowres, as if it should
Be for some bride, her joyous night to hold ; 635
Therein a goodly virgin sleeping lay,
A fairer wight saw never summer's-day.

I heard a voice that called far away,
And her awaking, bad her quickly dight,
For loe her bridegroom was in ready ray 640
To come to her, and seek her love's delight :
With that she started up with cheerful sight,
When suddenly both Bed and all was gone,
And I in langour left there all alone.

V.

Still as I gazed, I beheld where stood, 645
A Knight all arm'd upon a winged steed,
The same that bred was of Medusa's blood,
On which Dan Perseus, born of heavenly seed,
The fair Andromeda from peril-freed ;
Full mortally this Knight ywounded was, 650
That streams of blood forth flowed on the grass.

Yet was he deckt (small joy to him, alas !)
With many garlands for his victories,
And with rich spoils, which late he did purchase
Through brave atchievements from his enemies ;
Fainting at last through long infirmities, 656
He smote his steed, that straight to heaven bore,
And left me here his loss for to deplore.

VI.

Lastly, I saw an Ark of purest gold
Upon a brazen pillour standing high, 660
Which th' ashes seemed of a great prince to hold,
Enclos'd therein for endless memory
Of him whom all the world did glorify ;
Seemed the heavens with th' earth did disagree
Whether should of those ashes keeper be. 665

At last, me seem'd wing-footed Mercury,
From heaven descending to appease their strife,
The Ark did bear with him above the sky,
And to those ashes gave a second life,
To live in heaven, where happiness is rife ; 670
At which the earth did grieve exceedingly,
And I for dole was almost like to die.

L'ENVOY.

IMMORTAL Spirit of Phillisides !
Which now art made the heaven's ornament,
That whilom wast the world's chiefest riches, 675
Give leave to him that lov'd thee to lament
His loss, by lack of thee to heaven hent,

And with last duties of this broken verse,
Broken with sighs, to deck thy sable herse.

And ye, fair Lady ! th'honour of your days, 680
And glory of the world, your high thoughts scorn,
Vouchsafe this moniment of his last praise
With some few silver-dropping tears t'adorn ;
And as ye be of heavenly off-spring born,
So unto heaven let your high mind aspire,
And loath this dross of sinful world's desire. 686

MUIOPOTMOS:

OR,

THE FATE OF THE BUTTERFLY.

To the right worthy and vertuous Lady,

THE LADY CAREY.

MOST brave and bountiful Lady! for so excellent favours as I have received at your sweet hands, to offer these few leaves as in recompence, should be as to offer flowers to the gods for their divine benefits; therefore I have determined to give my self wholly to you, as quite abandoned from my self, and absolutely vowed to your services, which in all right is ever held for full recompence of debt or damage to have the person yielded. My person I wot well how little worth it is; but the faithful mind and humble zeal which I bear unto your Ladyship, may perhaps be more of price, as may please you to account and use the poor service thereof, which taketh glory to advance your excellent parts and noble vertues, and to spend it self in honouring you; not so much for your great bounty to my self, which yet may not be unminded, nor for name or kindred sake by you vouchsafed, being also regardable, as for that honourable name which ye have by your brave deserts purchast to your self, and spread in the mouths of all men; with which I have also presumed to grace my verses, and under your name to commend to the world this small Poem; the which beseeching your Ladyship to take in worth, and of all things therein according to your wonted graciousness to make a mild construction, I humbly pray for your happiness.

Your Ladyship's ever humbly,

EDMUND SPENSER.

MUIOPOTMOS, &c.

I SING of deadly dolorous debate,
Stirr'd up through wrathful Nemesis' despight,
Betwixt two mighty ones of great estate,
Drawn into arms and proof of mortal fight
Through proud ambition and heart swelling hate, 5
Whilst neither could the other's greater might
And 'sdainful scorn endure, that from small jar
Their wraths at length broke into open war.

The root whereof and tragical effect
Vouchsafe, O thou the mournful'st Muse of Nine!
That wont'st the tragick stage for to direct 11
In funeral complaints and wailful tine,
Reveal to me, and all the means detect
Through which sad Clarion did at last decline
To lowest wretchedness. And is there then 15
Such rancour in the hearts of mighty men?

Of all the race of silver-winged flies
Which do possess the empire of the air,
Betwixt the centred earth and azure skies,
Was none more favourable nor more fair, 20
Whilst Heaven did favour his felicities,
Than Clarion, the eldest son and heir
Of Muscarol, and in his father's sight
Of all alive did seem the fairest wight.

With fruitful hope his aged brest he fed 25
Of future good, which his young toward years,
Full of brave courage and bold hardy-hed,
Above th' ensample of his equal peers,
Did largely promise, and to him fore-red
(Whilst oft his heart did melt in tender tears) 30
That he in time would sure prove such an one
As should be worthy of his father's throne.

The fresh young Fly, in whom the kindly fire
Of lustful youth began to kindle fast,
Did much disdain to subject his desire 35
To loathsom sloth, or hours in ease to waste,
But joy'd to range abroad in fresh attire,
Through the wide compass of the airy coast,
And with unwearied wings each part t' inquire
Of the wide rule of his renowned sire : 40

For he so swift and nimble was of flight,
That from this lower tract he dar'd to fly
Up to the clouds, and thence with pinions light
To mount aloft unto the crystal sky,
To view the workmanship of heaven's hight, 45
Whence down descending, he along would fly
Upon the streaming rivers, sport to find,
And oft would dare to tempt the troublous wind.

So on a summer's-day when season mild
With gentle calm the world hath quieted, 50
And high in heaven Hyperion's fiery child
Ascending, did his beams abroad dissprede,

Whiles all the heavens on lower creatures smil'd,
Young Clarion with vauntful lustyhed
After his guise did cast abroad to fare, 55
And thereto 'gan his furnitures prepare.

His breast-plate first, that was of substance pure,
Before his noble heart he firmly bound,
'That mought his life from iron death assure,
And ward his gentle corps from cruel wound, 60
For it by art was framed to endure
The bit of baleful steel and bitter stound,
No less than that which Vulcane made to shield
Achilles' life from fate of Trojan field.

And then about his shoulders broad he threw 65
An hairy hide of some wild beast, whom he
In salvage forest by adventure slew,
And reft the spoil, his ornament to be ;
Which spreading all his back with dreadful view,
Made all that him so horrible did see, 70
Think him Alcides with the lyon's skin,
When the Næmean conquest he did win.

Upon his head his glistering burganet,
The which was wrought by wonderous device,
And curiously engraven, he did set : 75
The metal was of rare and passing price ;
Not Bilbo steel, nor brass from Corinth fet,
Nor costly Oricalh from strange Phœnice,
But such as could both Phœbus' arrows ward,
And th' hailing darts of heaven beating hard. 80

Therein two deadly weapons fixt he bore,
Strongly outlanced towards either side,
Like two sharp spears, his enemies to gore :
Like as a warlike brigandine applide
To fight, lays forth her threatful pikes afore, 85
The engines which in them sad death do hide ;
So did this Fly outstretch his fearful horns,
Yet so as him their terrour more adorns.

Lastly, his shiny wings, as silver bright,
Painted with thousand colours, passing far 90
All painters' skill, he did about him dight :
Not half so many sundry colours are
In Iris' bow, ne heaven doth shine so bright,
Distinguished with many a twinkling star,
Nor Juno's bird, in her eye-spotted train, 95
So many goodly colours doth contain.

Ne (may it be withouten peril spoken)
The archer god the son of Cytheree,
That joys on wretched lovers to be wroken,
And heaped spoils of bleeding hearts to see, 100
Bears in his wings so many a changeful token.
Ah! my liege Lord, forgive it unto me,
If ought against thine honour I have told ;
Yet sure those wings were fairer manifold.

Full many a lady fair, in court full oft 105
Beholding them, him secretly envide,
And wisht that two such fans, so silken soft,
And golden fair, her love would her provide;

Or that when them the gorgeous Fly had doft,
Some one that would with grace be gratifide, 110
From him would steal them privily away,
And bring to her so precious a prey.

Report is that Dame Venus, on a day
In spring, when flowres do cloath the fruitful ground,
Walking abroad with all her nymphs to play, 115
Bade her fair damsels, flocking her around,
To gather flowres, her forehead to array ;
Emongst the rest a gentle nymph was found,
Hight Astery, excelling all the crew
In courteous usage and unstained hue ; 120

Who being nimbler-jointed than the rest,
And more industrious, gathered more store
Of the field's honour than the others best,
Which they in secret hearts envying sore,
Told Venus, when her as the worthiest 125
She prais'd, that Cupid (as they heard before)
Did lend her secret aid in gathering
Into her lap the children of the Spring.

Whereof the goddess gathering jealous fear,
Not yet unmindful how not long ago 130
Her son to Psyche secret love did bear,
And long it close conceal'd, till mickle wo
Thereof arose, and many a rueful tear,
Reason with sudden rage did overgo,
And giving hasty credit to th' accuser, 135
Was led away of them that did abuse her.

Eftsoons that damsel by her heavenly might
She turn'd into a winged Butterfly,
In the wide air to make her wandring flight ;
And all those flowres with which so plenteously 140
Her lap she filled had, that bred her spight,
She placed in her wings, for memory
Of her pretended crime, though crime none were ;
Since which that Fly them in her wings doth bear.

Thus the fresh Clarion being ready dight, 145
Unto his journey did himself address,
And with good speed began to take his flight :
Over the fields in his frank lustiness,
And all the champain o'er he soared light,
And all the country wide he did possess, 150
Feeding upon their pleasures bounteously,
That none gainsaid, nor none did him envy.

The woods, the rivers, and the meadows green,
With his air-cutting wings he measured wide,
Ne did he leave the mountains bare unseen, 155
Nor the rank grassie fens' delights untride :
But none of these, however sweet they been,
Mote please his fancy, nor him cause t'abide :
His choiceful sense with every change doth flit ;
No common things may please a wavering wit. 160

To the gay gardens his unstaidd desire
Him wholly carried, to refresh his sprights ;
There lavish Nature, in her best attire,
Pours forth sweet odors and alluring sights ;

And Art, with her contending, doth aspire 165
T'excel the natural with made delights ;
And all that fair or pleasant may be found
In riotous excess doth there abound.

There he arriving, round about doth fly
From bed to bed, from one to other border, 170
And takes survey, with curious busie eye,
Of every flower and herb there set in order ;
Now this, now that, he tasteth tenderly,
Yet none of them he rudely doth disorder,
Ne with his feet their silken leaves deface, 175
But pastures on the pleasures of each place.

And evermore, with most variety,
And change of sweetness (for all change is sweet)
He casts his glutton sense to satisfie,
Now sucking of the sap of herbs most meet, 180
Or of the dew which yet on them does lie,
Now in the same bathing his tender feet ;
And then he pearcheth on some branch thereby,
To weather him, and his moist wings to dry.

And then again he turneth to his play, 185
To spoil the pleasures of that paradise :
The wholesom sage, and lavender still gray,
Rank-smelling rue, and cummin, good for eyes,
The roses reigning in the pride of May,
Sharp isop, good for green wounds' remedies, 190
Fair marigolds, and bees-alluring thime,
Sweet marjoram, and daisies decking prime :

Cool violets, and orpine growing still,
Embathed balm, and cheerful galingale,
Fresh costmary, and breathful camomil, 195
Dull poppy, and drink-quickning setuale,
Vein-healing verven, and head-purging dill,
Sound savory, and basil, harty-hale,
Fat colworts, and comforting perseline,
Cold lettice, and refreshing rosmarine ; 200

And whatso else of vertue good or ill
Grew in this garden, fetch'd from far away,
Of every one he takes, and tastes at will,
And on their pleasures greedily doth prey ;
Then when he hath both plaid and fed his fill, 205
In the warm sun he doth himself embay,
And there him rests in riotous suffisance
Of all his gladfulness and kingly joyance.

What more felicity can fall to creature
Than to enjoy delight with liberty, 210
And to be lord of all the works of Nature,
To reign in th' air from earth to highest sky ;
To feed on flowres, and weeds of glorious feature,
To take whatever thing doth please the eye ?
Who rests not pleased with such happiness, 215
Well worthy he to taste of wretchedness.

But what on earth can long abide in state ?
Or who can him assure of happy day ?
Sith morning fair may bring foul evening late,
And least mishap the most bless alter may ? 220

For thousand perils lie in close await
 About us daily, to work our decay,
 That none, except a god, or God him guide,
 May them avoid, or remedy provide.

And whatso heavens in their secret doom 225
 Ordained have, how can frail fleshly wight
 Fore-cast, but it must needs to issue come?
 The sea, the air, the fire, the day, the night,
 And th' armies of their creatures all and some
 Do serve to them, and with importune might 230
 War against us, the vassals of their will:
 Who then can save what they dispose to spill?

Not thou, O Clarion! though fairest thou
 Of all thy kind, unhappy, happy Fly!
 Whose cruel fate is woven even now 235
 Of Jove's own hand, to work thy misery;
 Ne may thee help the many a hearty vow
 Which thy old sire with sacred piety
 Hath poured forth for thee, and th' altars sprent;
 Nought may thee save from heaven's avengement. 240

It fortun'd (as Heavens had behight)
 That in this garden where young Clarion
 Was wont to solace him, a wicked wight,
 The foe of fair things, th' author of confusion,
 'The shame of Nature, the bonds slave of Spight, 245
 Had lately built his hateful mansion,
 And lurking closely, in await now lay,
 How he might any in his trap betray.

But when he spide the joyous Butterfly
In this fair plot dispadding to and fro, 250
Fearless of foes and hidden jeopardy,
Lord ! how he 'gan for to bestir him tho,
And to his wicked work each part apply !
His heart did yern against his hated fo,
And bowels so with rankling poison swell'd, 255
That scarce the skin the strong contagion held.

The cause why he this Fly so maliced
Was (as in stories it is written found)
For that his mother which him bore and bred,
'The most fine fingred workwoman on ground, 260
Arachne, by his means was vanquished
Of Pallas, and in her own skill confound,
When she with her for excellence contended,
That wrought her shame, and sorrow never ended.

For the Tritonian goddess, having heard 265
Her blazed fame, which all the world had fill'd,
Came down to prove the truth, and due reward
For her praise-worthy workmanship to yield ;
But the presumptuous damsel rashly dar'd
The goddess' self to challenge to the field, 270
And to compare with her in curious skill
Of works with loom, with needle, and with quill.

Minerva did the challenge not refuse,
But deign'd with her the paragon to make ;
So to their work they sit, and each doth chuse 275
What story she will for her tapet take.

Arachne figur'd how Jove did abuse
Europa like a bull, and on his back
Her through the sea did bear, so lively seen,
That it true sea and true bull ye would ween. 280

She seem'd still back unto the land to look,
And her play-fellows' aid to call, and fear
The dashing of the waves, that up she took
Her dainty feet, and garments gathered near ;
But (Lord !) how she in every member shook, 285
When as the land she saw no more appear,
But a wild wilderness of waters deep,
Then 'gan she greatly to lament and weep.

Before the bull she pictur'd winged Love,
With his young brother Sport, light fluttering 290
Upon the waves, as each had been a dove ;
The one his bow and shafts, the other spring
A burning tead about his head did move,
As in their sire's new love both triumphing ;
And many nymphs about them flocking round, 295
And many Tritons, which their horns did sound.

And round about her work she did empale,
With a fair border, wrought of sundry flow'rs,
Enwoven with an ivy-winding trayle ;
A goodly work, full fit for kingly bow'rs, 300
Such as dame Pallas, such as Envy pale,
That all good things with venemous tooth devours,
Could not accuse. Then 'gan the goddess bright
Her self likewise unto her work to dight.

She made the story of the old debate 305
Which she with Neptune did for Athens try ;
Twelve gods do sit around in royal state,
And Jove in midst with awful majesty,
To judge the strife between them stirred late ;
Each of the gods by his like visnomy 310
Eath to be known, but Jove above them all,
By his great looks and power imperial.

Before them stands the god of seas in place,
Claiming that sea-coast city as his right,
And strikes the rocks with his three-forked mace,
Whenceforth issues a warlike steed in sight, 316
The sign by which he challengeth the place,
That all the gods, which saw his wondrous might
Did surely deem the victory his due ;
But seldom seen forejudgment proveth true. 320

Then to her self she gives her Ægide shield,
And steel-head spear, and morion on her head,
Such as she oft is seen in warlike field ;
Then sets she forth, how with her weapon dred
Shesmote the ground, the which straight forth did yield
A fruitful olive-tree, with berries spred, 326
That all the gods admir'd ; then all the story
She compass'd with a wreath of olives hoary.

Emongst those leaves she made a Butterfly
With excellent device and wondrous slight, 330
Fluttring among the olives wantonly,
That seem'd to live, so like it was in sight ;

The velvet nap which on his wings doth lie,
The silken down with which his back is dight,
His broad out-stretched horns, his airy thighs, 335
His glorious colours, and his glistering eyes.

Which when Arachne saw, as overlaid
And mastered with workmanship so rare,
She stood astonied long, ne ought gainsaid,
And with fast fixed eyes on her did stare, 340
And by her silence, sign of one dismaid,
The victory did yield her as her share ;
Yet did she inly fret and felly burn,
And all her blood to poisonous rancour turn ;

That shortly from the shape of womanhed, 345
Such as she was when Pallas she attempted,
She grew to hideous shape of drerihed,
Pined with grief of folly late repented :
Eftsoons her white strait legs were altered
To crooked crawling shanks, of marrow emptied, 350
And her fair face to foul and loathsom hue,
And her fine corps to a bag of venom grew.

This cursed creature, mindful of that old
Enfestred grudge the which his mother felt,
So soon as Clarion he did behold, 355
His heart with vengeful malice inly swelt,
And weaving straight a net with many a fold
About the cave, in which he lurking dwelt,
With fine small cords about it stretched wide,
So finely spun that scarce they could be spide. 360

Not any damsel, which her vaunteth most
In skilful knitting of soft silken twine,
Nor any weaver, which his work doth boast
In diaper, in damask, or in lyne ;
Nor any skill'd in workmanship emboss'd ; 365
Nor any skill'd in louns of fingring fine,
Might in their diverse cunning ever dare
With this so curious net-work to compare.

Ne do I think that that same subtile gin
The which the Lemnian god fram'd craftily, 370
Mars sleeping with his wife to compass in,
That all the gods, with common mockery,
Might laugh at them, and scorn their shameful sin,
Was like to this : this same he did apply
For to entrap the careless Clarion, 375
That rang'd each where without suspicion.

Suspicion of friend, nor fear of foe,
That hazarded his health, had he at all,
But walk'd at will and wandred to and fro,
In the pride of his freedom principal : 380
Little wist he his fatal future woe,
But was secure ; the liker he to fall !
He likest is to fall into mischance
That is regardless of his governance.

Yet still Aragnol (so his foe was hight) 385
Lay lurking covertly him to surprise,
And all his gins that him entangle might,
Dress'd in good order as he could devise.

At length the foolish Fly, without foresight,
As he that did all danger quite despise, 390
Towards those parts came flying carelessly,
Where hidden was his fatal enemy.

Who seeing him, with secret joy therefore
Did tickle inwardly in every vein,
And his false heart, fraught with all treason's store,
Was fill'd with hope his purpose to obtain: 396
Himself he close upgathered more and more
Into his den, that his deceitful train
By his there being might not be bewraid,
Ne any noise, ne any motion, made. 400

Like as a wily fox, that having spide
Where on a sunny bank the lambs do play,
Full closely creeping by the hinder side,
Lies in ambushment of his hoped prey,
Ne stirreth limb, till seeing ready tide 405
He rusheth forth, and snatcheth quite away
One of the little younglings unawares ;
So to his work Aragnol him prepares.

Who now shall give unto my heavy eyes
A well of tears, that all may overflow ? 410
Or where shall I find lamentable cryes
And mournful tunes enough my grief to show ?
Help, O thou tragick Muse ? me to devise,
Notes sad enough t'express this bitter throw,
For loe ! the drery stownd is now arrived, 415
'That of all happiness hath us deprived.

The luckless Clarion, whether cruel Fate
Or wicked Fortune faultless him misled,
Or some ungracious blast out of the gate
Of Æole's reign perforce him drove on hed, 420
Was (O sad hap, and hour unfortunate !)
With violent swift flight forth carried
Into the cursed cobweb which his foe
Had framed for his final overthrow.

There the fond Fly entangled, struggled long, 425
Himself to free thereout; but all in vain;
For striving more, the more in laces strong
Himself he tide, and wrapt his wings twain
In limy snares the subtil loops among,
That in the end he breathless did remain, 430
And all his youthly forces idly spent,
Him to the mercy of th' avenger lent.

Which when the griesly tyrant did espy,
Like a grim lion rushing with fierce might
Out of his den, he seized greedily 435
On the resistless prey, and with fell spight,
Under the left wing strook his weapon sly
Into his heart, that his deep-groaning spright
In bloody streams forth fled into the air,
His body left the spectacle of care. 440

B R I T A I N ' S I D A .

IN SIX CANTOS.

To the right noble Lady,

M A R Y,

Daughter to the most illustrious Prince,

GEORGE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

MOST noble Lady! I have presumed to present this Poem to your honourable hand, encouraged only by the worth of the famous Author, (for I am certainly assured, by the ablest and most knowing men, that it must be a work of Spenser's, of whom it were pity that any thing should be lost) and doubting not but your Ladyship will graciously accept, though from a mean hand, this humble present, since the man that offers it is a true honourer and observer of your self and your princely family, and shall ever remain

The humblest of your devoted servants,

THOMAS WALKLEY.

MARTIAL.

*Accipe facundi culicem studiose Maronis,
Ne nugis positis, arma virumque canas.*

SEE here that stately Muse that erst could raise
In lasting numbers great Eliza's praise,
And dress fair Vertue in so rich attire,
That even her foes were forced to admire
And court her heavenly beauty ! She that taught
The Graces grace, and made the Vertues thought
More vertuous than before, is pleased here
To slack her serious flight, and feed your ear
With love's delightsom toys : do not refuse
These harmless sports ; 'tis learned Spenser's Muse ;
But think his loosest poems worthier than
The serious follies of unskilful men.

BRITAIN'S IDA.

CANTO I.

The Argument.

The youthly shepherds winning here,
And beauties rare displaid, appear;
What exercise he chief affects,
His name and scornful love neglects.

I.

IN Ida vale (who knows not Ida vale ?)
When harmless Troy yet felt not Græcian spite,
An hundred shepherds wonn'd, and in the dale,
While their fair flocks the three-leav'd pastures bite,
The shepherds boys with hundred sportlings light,
Gave wings unto the time's too speedy haste :
Ah, foolish Lads ! that strove with lavish waste
So fast to spend the time that spends your time as fast.

II.

Amongst the rest, that all the rest excell'd,
A dainty boy there wonn'd, whose harmless years
Now in their freshest budding gently swell'd ;
His nymph-like face ne'er felt the nimble sheers,
Youth's downy blossom through his cheek appears ;
His lovely limbs (but love he quite discarded)
Were made for play (but he no play regarded)
And fit love to reward, and with love be rewarded.

III.

High was his fore-head, arch'd with silver mould,
 (Where never anger churlish wrinkle dighted)
 His auburn locks hung like dark threds of gold,
 That wanton airs (with their fair length incited)
 To play amongst their wanton curles delighted ;
 His smiling eyes with simple truth were stor'd :
 Ah ! how should truth in those thief eyes be stor'd,
 Which thousand loves had stoln, and never one re-

IV.

[stor'd ?

His lilly-cheek might seem an ivory plain,
 More purely white than frozen Appenine,
 Where lovely Bashfulness did sweetly reign,
 In blushing scarlet cloth'd in purple fine.
 A hundred hearts had this delightful shrine,
 (Still cold itself) inflam'd with hot desire,
 That well the face might seem in divers tire,
 To be a burning snow, or else a freezing fire.

V.

His cheerful looks and merry face would prove
 (If eyes the index be where thoughts are read)
 A dainty play-fellow for naked Love ;
 Of all the other parts enough is said,
 That they were fit twins for so fair a head :
 Thousand boys for him, thousand maidens dy'd ;
 Die they that list, for such his rigorous pride,
 He thousand boys (ah, Fool !) and thousand maids

VI.

[deny'd.

His joy was not in musick's sweet delight,
 (Though well his hand had learnt that cunning art)

Or daintier songs to daintier ears t'indite,
But through the plains to chase the nimble hart
With well-tun'd hounds ; or with his certain dart
The tusked boar or savage bear to wound ;
Mean time his heart with monsters doth abound ;
Ah, Fool ! to seek so far what nearer might be found.

VII.

His name (well known unto those woody shades,
Where unrewarded lovers oft complain them)
Anchises was ; Anchises oft the glades
And mountains heard, Anchises had disdain'd them ;
Not all their love one gentle look had gain'd them,
That rocky hills, with ecchoing noise consenting,
Anchises plain'd ; but he no whit relenting,
Harder than rocky hills laugh at their vain lamenting.

CANTO II.*The Argument.*

Dione's garden of Delight,
With wonder holds Anchises' sight ;
While from the bower such musick sounds,
As all his senses near confounds.

I.

ONE day it chanc't as he the deer persu'd,
Tired with sport, and faint with weary play,
Fair Venus' grove not far away he view'd,
Whose trembling leaves invite him there to stay,
And in their shades his sweetening limbs display ;

There in the cooling glade he softly paces,
 And much delighted with their even spaces,
 What in himself he scorn'd, he prais'd their kind
 imbraces.

II.

The wood with Paphian myrtles peopled,
 (Whose springing youth felt never winter's spiting)
 To laurels sweet were sweetly married,
 Doubling their pleasing smells in their uniting;
 When single much, much more when mix'd delight-
 No foot of beast durst touch this hallow'd place, [ing:
 And many a boy that long'd the woods to trace,
 Entred with fear, but soon turn'd back his frightened

III.

[face.

The thick-lock'd boughs shut out the tell-tale sun,
 (For Venus hated his all-blabbing light,
 Since her known fault, which oft she wish'd undon)
 And scatter'd rays did make a doubtful sight,
 Like to the first of day or last of night:
 The fittest light for lover's gentle play:
 Such light best shews the wandering lover's way,
 And guides his erring hand: night is Love's holy-

IV.

[day.

So far in this sweet labyrinth he stray'd
 That now he views the garden of Delight,
 Whose breast with thousand painted flowers array'd,
 With divers joy captiv'd his wandering sight;
 But soon the eyes rendred the ears their right;
 For such strange harmony he seem'd to hear,
 That all his senses flock'd into his ear,
 And every faculty wish'd to be seated there.

V.

From a close bower this dainty musick flow'd,
A bowre apparel'd round with divers roses,
Both red and white, which by their liveries show'd
Their mistriss fair, that there her self reposes ;
Seem'd that would strive with those rare musick
By spreading their fair bosoms to the light, [closes,
Which the distracted sense should most delight ;
That raps the melted ear, this both the smell and sight.

VI.

The boy 'twixt fearful hope and wishing fear
Crept all along (for much he long'd to see
The bower, much more the guest so lodged there)
And as he goes he marks how well agree
Nature and Art in discord unity,
Each striving who should best perform his part,
Yet Art now helping Nature, Nature Art,
While from his ears a voice thus stole his heart.

VII.

[ing.

“ Fond Men! whose wretched care the life soon end-
“ By striving to increase your joy do spend it,
“ And spending joy, yet find no joy in spending ;
“ You hurt your life by striving to amend it,
“ And seeking to prolong it soonest end it ;
“ Then while fit time affords thee time and leasure,
“ Enjoy while yet thou may'st thy life's sweet pleasure ;
“ Too foolish is the man that starves to feed his trea-
sure.

VIII.

“ Love is life's end ; an end, but never ending ;
“ All joys, all sweets, all happiness, awarding ;

" Love is life's wealth (ne'er spent, but ever spending)
 " More rich by giving, taking by discarding ;
 " Love's life's reward, rewarded in rewarding :
 " Then from thy wretched heart fond care remove,
 " Ah ! shouldst thou live but once love's sweets to
 prove,
 " Thou wilt not love to live, unless thou live to love."

IX.

To this sweet voice a dainty musick fitted
 Its well-tun'd strings, and to her notes consorted,
 And while with skilful voice the song she dittied,
 The blabbing Eccho had her words retorted ;
 That now the boy beyond his soul transported,
 Through all his limbs feels run a pleasant shaking,
 And 'twixt a hope and fear, suspects mistaking,
 And doubts he sleeping dreams, and broad awake
 fears waking.

CANTO III.

The Argument.

Fair Cytherea's limbs beheld,
 The straying lad's heart so inthral'd,
 That in a trance his melted spright
 Leaves th' senses slumbring in delight.

I.

Now to the bower he sent his thievish eyes
 To steal a happy sight ; there do they find
 Fair Venus, that within half naked lies,
 And straight amaz'd (so glorious beauty shin'd)
 Would not return the message to the mind ;

But full of fear and superstitious awe,
Could not retire or back their beams with-draw,
So fix'd on too much seeing made they nothing saw.

II.

Her goodly length stretch'd on a lilly-bed,
(A bright foil of a beauty far more bright)
Few roses round about were scattered,
As if the lillies learnt to blush, for spight
To see a skin much more than lilly-white :
The bed sank with delight so to be pressed,
And knew not which to think a chance more blessed,
Both blessed so to kiss, and so again be kissed.

III.

Her spacious fore-head, like the clearest moon,
Whose full-grown orb begins now to be spent,
Largely display'd in native silver shone,
Giving wide room to beauty's regiment,
Which on the plain with love triumphing went ;
Her golden hair a rope of pearl imbrac'd,
Which with their dainty threads oft-times enlac'd,
Made the eye think the pearl was there in gold in-
[chas'd.

IV.

Her full large eye, in jetty black array'd,
Proud beauty not confin'd to red and white,
But oft her self in black more rich display'd ;
Both contraries did yet themselves unite,
To make one beauty in different delight ;
A thousand Loves sate playing in each eye,
And smiling Mirth, kissing fair Courtesy,
By sweet perswasion wan a bloodless victory.

v.

The whitest white set by her silver cheek
Grew pale and wan, like unto heavy lead ;
The freshest purple fresher dyes must seek,
That dares compare with them his fainting red :
On these Cupido winged armies led
Of little Loves that with bold wanton train
Under those colours, marching on the plain,
Force every heart, and to low vassalage constrain.

vi.

Her lips, most happy each in other's kisses,
From their so wish'd imbracements seldom parted,
Yet seem'd to blush at such their wanton blisses ;
But when sweet words their joying sweets parted,
To th' ear a dainty musick they imparted :
Upon them fitly sate, delightful smiling,
A thousand souls with pleasing stealth beguiling :
Ah! that such shews of joys should be all joys ex-

vii.

[iling.

The breath came slowly thence, unwilling leaving
So sweet a lodge ; but when she once intended
To feast the air with words, the heart deceiving,
More fast it thronged so to be expended ;
And at each word a hundred Loves attended,
Playing i' the breath, more sweet than is that firing
Where that Arabian only bird expiring
Lives by her death, by loss of breath more fresh re-

viii.

[spiring.

Her chin, like to a stone in gold inchas'd,
Seem'd a fair jewel wrought with cunning hand,

And being double, doubly the face grac'd :
This goodly frame on her round neck did stand ;
Such pillar well such curious work sustain'd ;
And on his top the heavenly sphear up-rearing,
Might well present, with daintier appearing,
A less but better Atlas, that fair heaven bearing.

IX.

Lower two breasts stand all their beauties bearing,
Two breasts as smooth and soft ; but, ah, alas !
Their smoothest softness far exceeds comparing ;
More smooth and soft, but nought that ever was,
Where they are first, deserves the second place ;
Yet each as soft and each as smooth as other ;
And when thou first try'st one, and then the other,
Each softer seems than each, and each than each

x.

[seems smoother.

Lowly between their dainty hemispheres,
(Their hemispheres the heav'nly globes excelling)
A path more white than is the name it bears,
The Lacteal Path, conducts to the sweet dwelling
Where best Delight all joys sits freely dealing ;
Where hundred sweets, and still fresh joys attending,
Receive in giving, and still love dispending,
Grow richer by their loss, and wealthy by expending.

XI.

But stay, bold Shepherd ! here thy footing stay,
Nor trust too much unto thy new-born quill,
As farther to those dainty limbs to stray,
Or hope to paint that vale or beauteous hill
Which past the finest hand or choicest skill ;

But were thy verse and song as finely fram'd
As are those parts, yet should it soon be blam'd,
For now the shameless world of best things is asham'd,

XII.

That cunning artist that old Greece admir'd,
Thus far his Venus fitly pourtrayed,
But there he left, nor farther ere aspir'd;
His Dædale hand, that nature perfected
By Art, felt Art by Nature limited.
Ah! well he knew, though his fit hand could give
Breath to dead colours, teaching marble live,
Yet would these lively parts his hand of skill deprive.

XIII.

Such when this gentle boy her closely view'd,
Only with thinnest silken veil o'er-laid,
Whose snowy colour much more snowy shew'd
By being next that skin, and all betray'd,
Which best in naked beauties are array'd,
His spirits, melted with so glorious sight,
Ran from their work to see so splendid light,
And left the fainting limbs sweet slumbring in de-
light.

CANTO IV.

The Argument.

The swooning swain recovered is
By th' goddess, his soul rapt in bliss :
Their mutual conference, and how
Her service she doth him allow.

I.

SOFT sleeping Venus, waked with the fall,
Looking behind, the sinking boy espies ;
Withall she stares, and wondereth withall ;
She thinks that there her fair Adonis dies,
And more she thinks the more the boy she eyes :
So stepping nearer, up begins to rear him ;
And now with Love himself she will confer him,
And now before her love himself she will prefer him.

II.

The lad, soon with that dainty touch reviv'd,
Feeling himself so well, so sweetly seated,
Begins to doubt whether he yet here liv'd,
Or else his flitting soul to heav'n translated,
Was there in starry throne and bliss instated ;
Oft would he die, so to be often sav'd ;
And now with happy wish he closely crav'd
For ever to be dead, to be so sweet ingrav'd.

III.

The Paphian princess (in whose lovely breast
Spiteful disdain could never find a place)

When now she saw him from his fit releast,
(To Juno leaving wrath and scolding base)
Comforts the trembling boy with smiling grace :
But oh ! those smiles (too full of sweet delight)
Surfeit his heart, full of the former sight ;
So seeking to revive, more wounds his feeble sprite.

IV.

Tell me, fair Boy ! (said she) what erring chance
Hither directed thy unwary pace ?
For sure Contempt or Pride durst not advance
Their foul aspect in thy so pleasant face :
Tell me what brought thee to this hidden place ?
Or lack of love, or mutual answering fire ?
Or hindred by ill chance in thy desire ?
Tell me what is't thy fair and wishing eyes require ?

V.

The boy, whose sense was never yet acquainted
With such a musick, stood with ears erected,
And sweetly with that pleasant spell enchanted,
More of those sugred strains long time expected ;
Till seeing she his speeches not rejected,
First sighs arising from his heart's low center,
Thus 'gan reply, when each word bold would venter,
And strive the first that dainty labyrinth to enter.

VI.

" Fair Cyprian Queen," (for well that heavenly face
Proves thee the mother of all-conquering Love)
" Pardon, I pray thee, my unweeting pacc,
" For no presumptuous thoughts did hither move
" My daring feet to this thy holy grove ;

“ But luckless chance (which if you not gain-say,
“ I still must rue) hath caus'd me here to stray,
“ And lose myself (alas!) in losing of my way.

VII.

“ Nor did I come to right my wronged fire ;
“ Never till now I saw what ought be lov'd ;
“ And now I see, but never dare aspire
“ To move my hope, where yet my love is mov'd ;
“ Whence though I would, I would it not remov'd ;
“ Only since I have plac'd my love so high,
“ Which sure thou must, or sure thou wilt deny,
“ Grant me yet still to love, though in my love to die.”

VIII.

But she that in his eyes Love's face had seen,
And flaming heart, did not such suit disdain,
(For cruelty fits not sweet Beauty's queen)
But gentle could his passion entertain,
Though she Love's princess, he a lowly swain :
First of his bold intrusion she acquits him,
Then to her service (happy Boy!) admits him,
And, like another Love, with bow and quiver fits him.

IX.

And now with all the Loves he grew acquainted,
And Cupid's self, with his like face delighted,
Taught him a hundred ways with which he daunted
The prouder hearts, and wronged lovers righted,
Forcing to love that most his love despighted :
And now the practique boy did so approve him,
And with such grace and cunning art did move him,
That all the pretty Loves and all the Graces love him..

CANTO V.

The Argument.

The lover's sad despairing plaints
 Bright Venus with his love acquaints;
 Sweetly importun'd, he doth show
 From whom proceedeth this his woe.

I.

YET never durst his faint and coward heart
 (Ah, Fool! faint heart fair lady ne'er could win)
 Assail fair Venus with his new-learnt art,
 But kept his love and burning flame within,
 Which more flam'd out the more he prest it in;
 And thinking oft how just she might disdain him,
 While some cool myrtle shade did entertain him,
 Thus sighing would he sit, and sadly would he plain
 him :

II.

“ Ah, fond and hapless Boy! nor know I whether
 “ More fond or hapless more, that all so high
 “ Hast plac'd thy heart, where love and Fate together
 “ May never hope to end thy misery,
 “ Nor yet thy self dare wish a remedy :
 “ All hindrances (alas!) conspire to lett it;
 “ Ah, fond, and hapless Boy! if canst not get it!
 “ In thinking to forget, at length learn to forget it.

III.

“ Ah, far too fond, but much more hapless Swain !
“ Seeing thy love can be forgotten never,
“ Serve and observe thy love with willing pain ;
“ And though in vain thy love thou do preserve,
“ Yet all in vaine do thou adore her ever.
“ No hope can crown thy thoughts so far aspiring,
“ Nor dares thy self desire thine own desiring,
“ Yet live thou in her love, and die in her admiring.”

IV.

Thus oft the hopeless boy complaining lies ;
But she, that well could guess his sad lamenting,
(Who can conceal Love from Love's mother's eyes ?)
Did not disdain to give his love contenting ;
Cruel the soul that feeds on souls tormenting :
Nor did she scorn him, though not nobly born,
(Love is nobility) nor could she scorn
That with so noble skill her title did adorn.

V.

One day it chanc'd, thrice happy day and chance !
While Loves were with the Graces sweetly sporting,
And to fresh musick sounding play and dance,
And Cupid's self, with shepherds' boys consorting,
Laugh'd at their pritty sport and simple courting,
Fair Venus seats the fearful boy close by her,
Where never Phœbus' jealous looks might eye her,
And bids the boy his mistress and her name descry her.

VI.

Long time the youth up-bound in silence stood,
While hope and fear with hundred thoughts begun,
Fit prologue to his speech, and fearful blood

From heart and face with these post-tydings run,
 That either now he's made, or now undon ;
 At length his trembling words, with fear made weak,
 Began his too long silence thus to break, [speak.
 While from his humble eyes first reverence seem'd to

VII.

" Fair Queen of Love ! my life thou mayst command,
 " Too slender price for all thy former grace
 " Which I receive at thy so bounteous hand,
 " But never dare I speak her name and face ;
 " My life is much less-priz'd than her disgrace ;
 " And for I know if I her name relate
 " I purchase anger, I must hide her state,
 " Unless thou swear by Styx I purchase not her
 hate."

VIII.

Fair Venus well perceiv'd his subtile shift,
 And, swearing gentle patience, gently smil'd,
 While thus the boy pursu'd his former drift :
 " No tongue was ever yet so sweetly skill'd,
 " Nor greatest orator so highly stil'd,
 " Though helpt with all the choicest art's direction,
 " But when he durst describe her heaven's perfection,
 " By his imperfect praise disprais'd his imperfection.

IX.

" Her form is as herself, perfect cœlestial,
 " No mortal spot her heavenly frame disgraces :
 " Beyond compare such nothing is terrestrial ?
 " More sweet than thought or pow'rful wish em-
 braces ;
 " The map of heaven the sum of all her graces :

“ But if you wish more truly limb'd to eye her,
“ Than fainting speech or words can well descry her,
“ Look in a glass, and there more perfect you may
 spy her.”

CANTO VI.

The Argument.

The boy's short wish, her larger grant,
That doth his soul with bliss enchant;
Whereof impatient uttering all,
Inraged Jove contrives his thrall.

I.

“ THY crafty art (reply'd the smiling queen)
“ Hath well my chiding and not rage prevented,
“ Yet might'st thou think that yet 't was never seen
“ That angry rage and gentle love consented;
“ But if to me thy true love is presented,
“ What wages for thy service must I owe thee?
“ For by the self-same vow I here avow thee,
“ Whatever thou require I frankly will allow thee.”

II.

“ Pardon (replies the boy) for so affecting
“ Beyond mortality, and not discarding
“ Thy service, was much more than my expecting;
“ But if thou (more thy bounty-hood regarding)
“ Wilt needs heap up reward upon rewarding,

“ Thy love I dare not ask, or mutual fixing,
“ One kiss is all my love and pride’s aspiring,
“ And after starve my heart, for my too much desiring.”

III.

“ Fond Boy! (said she) too fond, that ask’d no more;
“ Thy want by taking is no whit decreased,
“ And giving spends not our increasing store.”
Thus with a kiss his lips she sweetly pressed;
Most blessed kiss! but hope more than most blessed.
The boy did think heaven fell while thus he joy’d,
And while joy he so greedily enjoy’d,
He felt not half his joy by being over-joy’d,

IV.

“ Why sigh’st? fair Boy! (said she) dost thou repent thee
“ Thy narrow wish in such straight bonds to stay?”
“ Well may I sigh (said he) and well lament me,
“ That never such a debt may hope to pay.”
“ A kiss, (said she) a kiss will back repay.”
“ Wilt thou (reply’d the boy, too much delighted)
“ Content thee with such pay to be requited?”
She grants; and he his lips, heart, soul, to payment cited.

V.

Look as a ward, from time his lands detain’d,
And subject to his guardian’s cruel lore,
Now spends the more, the more he was restrain’d;
So he; yet though in laying out his store
He doubly takes, yet finds himself grow poor;

With that he marks, and tells her out a score,
And doubles them, and trebles all before.
Fond boy ! the more thou payst thy debt still grows
the more.

VI.

At length, whether these favours so had fir'd him
With kindly heat, inflaming his desiring,
Or whether those sweet kisses had inspir'd him,
He thinks that something wants for his requiring,
And still aspires, yet knows not his aspiring ;
But yet though that he knoweth so she gave,
That he presents himself her bounden slave, [crave.
Still his more wishing face seem'd somewhat else to

VII.

And boldned with success and many graces,
His hand, chain'd up in fear, he now releas'd,
And asking leave, courag'd with her embraces,
Again it prison'd in her tender breast :
Ah, blessed prison ! pris'ners too much blest !
There with those sisters long time doth he play,
And now full boldly enters Love's highway, [stray.
While down the pleasant vale his creeping hand doth

VIII.

She, not displeas'd with this his wanton play,
Hiding his blushing with a sugred kiss,
With such sweet heat his rudeness doth allay,
That now he perfect knows whatever bliss
Elder Love taught, and he before did miss ;
That moult with joy, in such untry'd joys trying,
He gladly dies ; and death new life applying,
Gladly again he dies, that oft he may be dying.

IX.

Long thus he liv'd, slumbring in sweet delight,
Free from sad care and fickle world's annoy,
Bathing in liquid joys his melted sprite ;
And longer mought, but he (ah, foolish Boy !)
Too proud, and too impatient of his joy,
'To woods, and heaven, and earth, his bliss imparted,
That Jove upon him down his thunder darted,
Blasting his splendent face, and all his beauty swarted..

X.

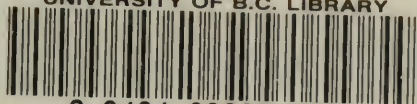
Such be his chance that to his love doth wrong ;
Unworthy he to have so worthy place,
That cannot hold his peace and blabbing tongue ;
Light joys float on his lips, but rightly grace
Sinks deep, and th' heart's low center doth embrace.
Might I enjoy my love till I unfold it,
I'd lose all favours when I blabbing told it :
He is not fit for love that is not fit to hold it.

F I N I S .

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